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A

COMMENTARY

ON

THE APOCALYPSE.

BY

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COMMENTARY.

INSCRIPTION.—CHAP. I. 1—3.

(1, 2.) The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him, to show his servants what must speedily come to pass; and sending by his angel he signified to his servant John, who proclaimed the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, whatsoever he saw.

This apparently simple and intelligible sentence has been regarded by many as replete, in the original, with real difficulties. It has therefore been the subject of much controversy among critics; nor, down to the present hour, has all doubt respecting its true meaning been removed. The manner in which I have translated and pointed it, will probably be called in question by some, and may be wholly rejected by others. Amidst the multitude of discrepant opinions and criticisms respecting the passage, it would be difficult to select any one which appears to my mind as deserving of unqualified approbation. After an attentive examination of most of them, I have felt compelled to choose a meaning that seems appropriate to the true grammatical construction of the text; and I must now present to the reader the grounds and reasons of my choice.

A critical examination of the words, and then of the apparent meaning of each clause, comes first in order, before we can arrive at any general conclusion in respect to the meaning of the whole.

Ἀποκάλυψις has often been said *not* to be a word of pure Greek idiom. "Proprie Scripturarum est," says Jerome, commenting on it as it occurs in Gal. 1: 12; and he then adds: A nullo sapientum saeculi apud Graecos usurpatur. But he is mistaken; for Plutarch uses it (see Rob. Lex. sub. v.), and Porphyry employs it, Vita Plot. c. 16. Julius Pollux also, in his Onomast., ranks together as synonymes *διακαλύψαι, ἐκκαλύψαι, ἀποκαλύψαι, δηλῶσαι*, etc. The verb *ἀνακαλύπτω* is, of the same meaning substantially as *ἀποκαλύπτω*, i. e. it literally signifies to *uncover, to disclose*, and so (secondarily) *to bring to light, to reveal*, etc. *Ἀνακάλυψις* may therefore be well translated *revelation*.

It is here employed as the *title* of the book at the head of which it stands, and of course it lacks the article ἡ, which, if prefixed, might convey a wrong sense, i. e. it might mean *the revelation* in a monadic sense, excluding other books from the like claim; or else it might imply some previous mention of the book, or previous knowledge of it in the reader's mind; all of which would be incongruous. In English, however, there lies not the same objection against employing the definite article in this case, as our usage does not altogether accord with the Greek. Accordingly, we find the definite article *the* commonly employed before the word *Revelation;* and I have conformed to this usage in the version above.

That the word ἀποκάλυψις, as here employed, means *a revelation of an extraordinary nature, a disclosure of things to come made by special divine arrangement and aid*, is plain from the context itself, which develops the extraordinary means by which it was made, and then calls it (v. 3) by the name of προφητεία, which, by sacred usage, imports what has been stated. The same thing is manifest from a comparison of the word ἀποκάλυψις, as employed in the like sense, in 2 Cor. 12: 1. Gal. 1: 12. 2: 2. Eph. 3: 3. These passages cast light on that part of the meaning which indicates special divine interposition; while the idea of developing or disclosing something secret, hidden, mysterious, or inaccessible to common minds, is at the same time specially brought to view by the use of ἀποκάλυψις in such passages as Rom. 16: 25. 1 Cor. 14: 6, 26. Sirach 22: 22. 42: 1. The context abundantly confirms such a sense here; for it affirms two things, viz. first, that this ἀποκάλυψις has respect to what is to take place in future, and secondly, that God and Christ and his angel all coöperate in making the disclosure to John.—There is indeed a possible sense of the word ἀποκάλυψις which is different from this, viz. when it means *manifestation* or *exhibition* of any thing or person; in which case it is nearly equivalent to ἐπιφάνεια, e. g. in 1 Cor. 1: 7. 2 Thess. 1: 7. 1 Pet. 1: 7, 13. 4: 13; and this sense Heinrichs (strangely enough) adopts here. But what then must become of the obvious sense of ἣν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεός, δεῖξαι κ. τ. λ.?

Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ — Is Christ *subject* or *object?* That is, is he the personage who is in possession of the revelation and discloses it according to his will; or is he the individual to whom the revelation has respect, and in regard to whom it makes disclosures? The Genitive case, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, would in itself bear either construction; and both constructions are common throughout the Scriptures; but here the sequel—ἣν ἔδωκεν ὁ θεός renders it quite certain that the first sense is the only one which the passage will bear.

Ἣν . . . ὁ θεός, an important declaration in respect to its bearing on the person and office of Christ; but one, I may add, altogether in unison

with other Scriptures, specially with the Gospel of John.—*Ἔδωκεν, imparted, communicated*, which is the appropriate shade of meaning in this case, inasmuch as *information, instruction* is concerned with it. See the same shade of sense in John 17: 7, 8, thrice, and also Acts 7: 38. With the particular meaning of this verb there is indeed no difficulty; but the sentiment of the whole passage is a question of difficulty, if there be any; for this appears to represent the Redeemer, even in his glorified state, (for such it was when the Apocalypse was written), as dependent on the Father for revelations of such a nature. But let the reader now compare John 5: 19, 20. 7: 16. 8: 28 (where *ἐδίδαξε* is said of the Father in respect to the Son, which well explains *ἔδωκεν* in our text). 12: 49. 14: 10. 17: 7, 8. Matt. 11: 27. Mark 13: 32. Acts 1: 7 (in connection with Mark 13: 32). Most fully does Paul exhibit his belief in the sentiment of *mediatorial* dependence in 1 Cor. 15: 24—28. By this last passage it appears, that Christ remains in the state of *Vicegerent* merely until the consummation of all things, when his *delegated* dominion will be given up. The texts in Mark 13: 32 and Acts 1: 7 (comp. Luke 2: 52) show, that Christ as to his human nature was *progressive* in knowledge, and of course that there were some things not yet known to him in this nature before his ascension to glory; and among these things was the particular and exact time of his coming. The *ἔδωκεν* of our text would seem however to imply, that even *after* his exaltation the Mediator received those disclosures from the Father, which are made in the Apocalypse. This is perfectly congruous with the view given by Paul in 1 Cor. 15: 24—28, which necessarily implies the *dependent* state of the Mediator until the final consummation of all things, and that his dominion as Mediator is only a delegated one. I may add, that the sentiment of our text is truly *Johannean*, whoever the author of it may be.

Δεῖξαι κ. τ. λ. Nothing could be more appropriate to the nature of the book before us, than the choice of the verb *δεῖξαι* here, which naturally and usually means to *show* or *exhibit* anything to the evidence of the senses, i. e. to present to view, to submit to inspection. The verb has here a palpable reference to the nature of the sequel, in which John is taught *ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι* by sensible tokens and symbols. The metaphorical sense, *teach, disclose*, is very unfrequent, even in the New Testament; and of the four instances arranged under this head in Rob. Lex., two at least do not properly belong there, but refer to *sensible* exhibitions. The composite idea, however, of *disclosing by the use of signs and symbols*, belongs to *δεῖξαι* in the case before us.

Τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ. The critical editions differ as to the reading *αὐτοῦ*, which Griesbach, Knapp, Vater, and Hahn adopt; while Wetstein, Bengel, Matthäi, and Lachmann read *αὑτοῦ*. The latter reading

would refer the pronoun to God, while *αὐτοῦ* refers it to Christ. The sense is not materially different in either case; for the servants of God are the servants of Christ, and *vice versâ*. That Christ is the subject (implied) of the Infinitive *δεῖξαι* seems to be clear from the tenor of the sentiment; for the sequel shows that Christ, or his angel, appears and makes all the disclosures of the book.—But who are the *δούλοις*? Are they prophets, apostles, teachers? Or does this word here designate the worshippers of God, the servants of Christ in general? For the former sense one might contend, so far as the *usus loquendi* in respect to *δοῦλος* is concerned; see Rom. 1: 1. Gal. 1: 10. Phil. 1: 1. Col. 4: 12. Tit. 1: 1. James 1: 1. 2 Pet. 1: 1. Jude v. 1. Rev. 22: 9 (*σύνδουλος*). So the well known usage in Hebrew of עֶבֶד יְהוָה, in a multitude of instances; see Ges. Lex. sub v. But then it is equally true, that *δοῦλος* (and עֶבֶד) is sometimes applied to the *mass* of the people of God, to the *community* of his worshippers; even in the Apocalypse itself is this the case, Rev. 2: 20. 7: 3. 11: 18 (where it is expressly used as comprehending *ἅγιοι* and *προφῆται*). 19: 2, 5. 22: 3. Still, the other sense of *δοῦλος*, viz. *prophet, teacher*, is also common to the Apocalypse; e. g. 1: 1 (*δούλῳ . . . Ἰωάννῃ*), 10: 7 where *προφήτας* is added as epexegetical, 15: 3. In 22: 6 it may designate either the prophets, or the pious in general; for the sense is good if taken in either way. In Hebrew, עֶבֶד יְהוָה is altogether a common appellation for a true worshipper of Jehovah, and the whole Jewish nation are often addressed as being *the servants of God*, because they are his professed worshippers.—In such a case then as the one before us, the *context* must decide; and this evidently favours the sense of the word in Rev. 2: 20, viz. the mass of the Christian community or *Christians*. Accordingly the seven churches of Asia are immediately addressed in the sequel, and to them the book before us is dedicated (so to speak) and sent, plainly in order to be published or circulated by them. It is then *to the churches* that the things in the Apocalypse are shown.

Ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι, what must take place, i. e. by an arrangement of an overruling and all-controlling providence. In other words; what is predicted in the Apocalypse will certainly come to pass. Such things are not left to chance, they are not fortuitous, for *δεῖ γενέσθαι, they must needs happen*. In other words still; God, who gave a revelation of future things to Christ, has ordained them and will bring them to pass.

Ἐν τάχει, a controverted expression, on which much has been made to depend. Some commentators, recognizing the evident fact that the apocalyptic predictions cover much ground and require a long series of years for their accomplishment (see Rev. 20: 4, 7), have zealously endeavoured to show that *τάχει* designates only the *maturity* of things for any particular event, and, as connected with this, the *certainty* of the

event itself. So Eichhorn; and after him, Heinrichs and others. But the texts appealed to by them do not show this; nor is there any necessary affinity between the certainty of a thing and its speedy accomplishment. E. g. a general judgment is certain; but it is not therefore *speedily* to take place. The plain and obvious sense of *ἐν τάχει* is *speedily, quickly, shortly;* so *ὁ καιρὸς ἐγγύς*, in v. 3, plainly interprets it. See also Rev. 2: 16. 3: 11. 11: 14. 22: 7, 12, 20. If now anything clear can be made out from the Apocalypse, it is at least clear that chap. iv—xi. have special reference to Jerusalem and Judea. Equally clear is it that chap. xii—xix. have reference to persecuting and heathen Rome. In both cases persecution was urgent and raging, when the Apocalypse was written; which, as we have seen (Vol. I. § 16), was *before* the destruction of Jerusalem. Now, although the closing part of the Revelation relates beyond all doubt to a distant period, and some of it to a future eternity, yet the portion of the book which contains this is so small, and that part of the book which was speedily fulfilled is so large, that no reasonable difficulty can be made concerning the declaration before us. *Ἐν τάχει*, i. e. speedily, did the things, on account of which the book was principally written, in fact take place. And although the Romish persecutions were afterwards repeated, yet it is enough to vindicate the expression before us, that the overthrow of the then persecuting power was very speedy, and that this overthrow was an earnest of the fate of all future persecutors.

Καὶ ἐσήμανεν, lit. *showed* or *indicated by signs* or *symbols*. The verb *σημαίνω* evidently comes from *σῆμα* = *σήμειον, sign, token, symbol*. The word is exquisitely chosen in reference to the sequel of the book, almost all of which consists of *symbolic* representation. In the like way is the verb *σημαίνω* employed in John 12: 33. 18: 32, (referring to what Jesus had said on a former occasion, see in 12: 31—33). 21: 19. In a similar sense it occurs in Acts 11: 28. 25: 27; yet less exactly according to the natural and original meaning of the word, for in Acts it signifies to *indicate* in a generic sense. Plutarch (De Orac. Delph. p. 104) represents Heraclitus as saying, in respect to the oracle: '*Οὔτε λέγει οὔτε κρύπτει, ἀλλὰ σημαίνει*, i. e. it neither speaks out plainly, nor wholly conceals, but *indicates by symbols* or *in an enigmatical way.*'—But with what is this verb to be constructed? Who is *agent*, and what is *object?* In all instances above referred to, in John and in Acts, the verb has an object after it, although a compound one. Is it so here? Dr. Robinson, in his Lexicon, has put it down as *absolute*, i. e. without an object. Most critics have represented *ἥν* (at the beginning of the second clause and referring to *ἀποκάλυψις*) as the object or Acc. case after *ἐσήμανεν*. But this is a hard construction. My own view of the case is, as the translation above indicates, that *ὅσα εἶδε* is the object, which, according to

the usual law of brachylogy in the Greek language, stands for *ἐκεῖνα ὅσα εἶδε*. In this case all is plain and easy, specially when we regard *ὃς ἐμαρτύρησε . . . Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* as a parenthetic and epexegetical clause; which it plainly is. Then, moreover, we have this simple sentiment: 'Christ, employing an angel as his messenger, by symbols disclosed to his servant John whatsoever things he saw in prophetic vision.' At all events, this interpretation accords well with the state of facts. It should be remarked, also, that although the word *δεῖξαι* is finely chosen, *ἐσήμανε* is evidently a still more exquisitely select designation of what was done in order to make a revelation to John.

But who is the *agent* for *ἐσήμανε*? Most interpreters say that it is Jesus Christ; and they appeal to Rev. 22: 16, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify to you these things respecting the churches." This would be conclusive, were it not that there is another passage which seems, with equal or greater force, to plead for another construction; i. e. Rev. 22: 6, "The Lord God of the spirits of the prophets hath sent his angel *δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει*." Can this be anything less than a direct appeal to the very words of Rev. 1: 1, which have already been considered? Moreover as *θεός* is the undoubted agent to the verb *ἔδωκεν*, and *ἐσήμανεν* stands connected with that verb by *καί*, without any intimation of a change of agent, so this would seem to be sufficient to settle the question upon fair grounds. Had Lücke noted the passage in Rev. 22: 6, he might have saved himself the trouble he has taken (Stud. und Kritiken, IX. p. 655) to account for a change of agent in the case of *ἐσήμανε*. 'Such changes,' he says, 'are not a matter of doubt in the Apocalypse; and here *δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις κ. τ. λ.* which precedes, shows beyond a question that Christ is the agent, and therefore he is to be regarded as the agent to *ἐσήμανε*.' But as nothing important is gained for the sense of the passage by such a change of agents, and as such changes (I venture to say) are *not* so frequent in the Apocalypse as Lücke seems to intimate, so we may construe the whole in the regular grammatical order, making *ὁ θεός* the agent. Still, I do not think any violence is done, if *Christ* be made the agent.

Ἀποστείλας makes a difficulty, not as to *subject* or *agent*, for this must be the same which is connected with *ἐσήμανε*, but as to *object*. Sending *what*, by the angel? *Ἀποκάλυψιν* is the common answer. But this, as a *book*, he did not send; nor as a *communication* did he send it by an angel, for John saw the symbols with his own prophetic eye, and the angel was merely his companion, helper, or interpreter. In this strait, if we turn now to Rev. 22: 6, we shall find the matter thus stated: *ἀπέστειλε τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ*. In the passage before us, then, *ἀποστείλας κ. τ. λ.* stands connected with

δεῖξαι κ. τ. λ. implied, and the thought in the writer's mind, if filled out, would seem to be, καὶ, ἀποστείλας διὰ τοῦ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ [εἰς τὸ δεῖξαι κ. τ. λ.], ἐσήμανε τῷ δούλῳ κ. τ. λ. Instead of this, Ewald takes ἀποστείλας in the *absolute* sense, like שָׁלַח בְּיַד in Ex. 4: 13. The whole clause might indeed be understood in a kind of absolute way, as being equivalent to the following expression — *making use of his angel as an agent*, he signified, etc. But the mode of solving it suggested by 22: 6, is more grammatical and more facile. The present form of the clause is plainly brachylogical.

Δούλῳ, as designating *prophets, apostles, and special messengers* of God, has already been explained above.—Αὐτοῦ is the right reading here, and not ἑαυτοῦ as some editions have it, and even Lachmann; for whether God or Christ be the agent to ἐσήμανε and ἀποστείλας, αὐτοῦ would be the more regular reading; see N. Test. Gramm. § 110. 5. Note 2.

Ἰωάννῃ is in apposition with δούλῳ, and is designed as an explanatory adjunct. But as there were doubtless many *Johns* at that time, this proper name itself would seem to need some further explanation. Accordingly we have it in the sequel.

Ὃς ἐμαρτύρησε . . . Ἰ. Χριστοῦ, also an epexegetical clause which has been itself more discussed and controverted, than almost anything in the whole Apocalypse. The reason of this is, that the sentiment of the clause stands connected with the great critical inquiry: Who was the author of the Revelation? A large class of critics find here described the Gospel of John (τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ), the Epistles of John (τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰ. Χριστοῦ), and finally the Apocalypse itself ὅσα εἶδε, (or as they generally read ὅσα τε εἶδε). Others find in the first two expressions only the Gospel and Epistles taken as a whole, and in the latter expression they find a declaration that John was an *eye-witness* of all which he had written; and they appeal to 1 John 1: 1—3 for a declaration of similar import. But in this last passage John declares, that he discloses not only what he had seen, but also what he had *heard;* and this very appropriately, for the greater part of his Gospel and of his first Epistle, consists of doctrines which he had heard, or which had been taught him by Jesus Christ. Ὅσα εἶδε would seem, then, to be altogether too limited to express the subject matter of the Gospel and Epistles; while it is entirely appropriate when referred to the visions of the Apocalypse. Lücke, in order to avoid a reference to the Gospel and Epistles here, represents λόγον θεοῦ and μαρτυρίαν Χριστοῦ as merely descriptive of the Apocalypse itself, and then regards ὅσα εἶδε as only an adjunct explanatory clause, intended to designate the manner in which the Apocalypse was made known to its author. Which of these two parties is in the right? Or is either of them? These ques-

tions must be answered by resorting, first of all, to the meaning of each subordinate part of the clause before us.

Ἐμαρτύρησε has oftentimes, in the New Testament, its usual sense of *testifying*, i. e. of bearing witness, of giving testimony respecting anything. This is plainly the natural and usual import of the word. But the corresponding Hebrew verb with its correlative noun, and μαρτυρέω with its correlative noun, not unfrequently convey a meaning specifically diverse from this. Thus the Hebrew הֵעִיד (from עוּד) signifies *he affirmed, he solemnly affirmed* or *declared, he solemnly enjoined*, etc; and its correlate noun עֵדָה means not only *testimony*, but also *precept, solemn declaration*, etc. The word μαρτυρέω is a favorite one in the writings of John; e. g. John 3: 11, "ὃ οἴδαμεν λαλοῦμεν, καὶ ὃ ἑωράκαμεν μαρτυροῦμεν, i. e. what we know we speak of, and what we have seen *we declare*;" for so the parallelism obliges us to interpret μαρτυροῦμεν. So 3: 32, "What he has seen and heard, τοῦτο μαρτυρεῖ, this *he declares* or *publishes* to the world." So in 1 John 1: 2. 1 Cor. 15: 15. Acts 23: 11. John 21: 24, where ὁ μαρτυρῶν designates the evangelist as a *historian*, declaring to the world the words and deeds of Jesus. So in Rev. 22: 16, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel μαρτυρῆσαι, *to declare* these things respecting the churches." So also in the verse before us μαρτυρίαν is plainly a parallelism of λόγον, which means *declaration*, or *what is spoken* or *declared;* also in Rev. 1: 9. 6: 9. 12: 11 where we have λόγον μαρτυρίας αὐτῶν, i. e. the word or doctrine which they published or declared; 12: 17, where μαρτυρίαν parallelizes with ἐντολάς; 20: 4.—The plain result is, that ἐμαρτύρησε means *declared, published, openly and solemnly affirmed* or *proclaimed*. If any one chooses still, in conformity to the Greek mode of expression here, to translate the word by *testified*, there is no objection to this; for one of our best English lexicographers has defined *testify* as sometimes meaning *to declare* or *publish freely*. Usage sanctions such an explanation of the English word.

But what is it which John *published* or *declared?* Τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Is θεοῦ and Χριστοῦ here *subject* or *object?* That is, does the author speak of the word which has respect to God, and the testimony which has respect to Christ? Or does he mean the word of which God is the author and communicator, and the testimony which Christ discloses? Beyond all reasonable doubt the latter; for so a comparison with the former part of v. 1 would plainly imply, and so the nature of the case seems plainly to demand. John testified whatever God and Christ had communicated to him for this purpose. So in v. 5, Jesus Christ is accordingly called ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός, not the faithful martyr, but the *witness* whose declarations are worthy of all credit. Lücke (Stud. and Krit. IX. p. 654 seq.) has

strenuously contended that *λόγον* and *μαρτυρίαν* here are = *ἀποκάλυψιν*, i. e. the Apocalypse. It is certainly a possible sense; for *λόγος θεοῦ* = דְּבַר יְהוָה, may be predicated of any oracle, prediction, declaration, disclosure of any kind whatever, whether by visions, symbols, or otherwise; as the lexicons abundantly show, and as every attentive reader of the Scriptures must have observed. And the same may be said of the Johannean usage of *μαρτυρίαν*. So in Is. 8: 16, 20, תְּעוּדָה parallelizes with תּוֹרָה, *precept, instruction, something taught*. So, in the passages cited above, *μαρτυρία* is for substance parallel with *λόγος* and with *ἐντολή*. But it is manifest, at the same time, that *λόγον θεοῦ* and *μαρτυρία Χριστοῦ* are equally well fitted to designate what John had done, or was doing, as a preacher of the Gospel, or as a writer of evangelical narrative. It is not then the nature of the phraesology here which can determine the question before us; for this would apply equally well to christian preaching, to a christian writing, or to the composition of the Apocalypse itself. An appeal for decision must therefore be made to other circumstances than the nature of the phraseology.

Such an appeal, I think, may be made with confidence to Rev. 1: 9, where John says, in addressing the churches: "I . . . your brother, and companion in the affliction and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle called Patmos, *διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ*." Now he could not be there because of having written and published the Apocalypse; for this was written after he went there, possibly, even after he had left there. Lücke, in order to avoid the difficulty which this throws in his way, suggests that *διά* does not mark here, as usual, a *preceding* cause or ground of being sent to Patmos, but a *subsequent and ultimate end* to be obtained by going thither. But Winer, in the latest edition of his New Testament Grammar (§ 53. c), strenuously denies that such a meaning can be given to *διά* before the Accusative case; yet Lücke appeals to its use in Rom. 4: 25 and Phil. 2: 30, not only as deciding the possibility of such a meaning, but rather as decisive of such an one in point of fact. But these examples may be solved on a different ground. At any rate, since they are the only ones in the New Testament to which Lücke ventures to make an appeal, and as they are against the usual tenor of Greek usage, one cannot feel entire confidence in the appeal; see Vol. I. p. 259 seq. *Διά* is a word which occurs too often not to be well-known as to its usual meanings; and in the Apocalypse itself the instances of it, as construed with the Accusative case, are somewhat numerous, e. g. 2: 3. 4: 11. 7: 15. 12: 12. 13: 14. 18: 8, 10, 15; all with the usual meaning. In addition to these are several cases exactly correspondent with the one in chap. 1: 9, which admit of no reasonable controversy. In Rev. 6: 9, John speaks of souls seen by him under the altar slain, *διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ*

διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἣν εἶχον, by which clause the *antecedent* and moving cause or ground of their sufferings and death is designated, viz. their perseverance in professing and declaring the Christian faith and doctrine. In Rev. 12: 11, of the victorious host of the redeemed in heaven it is said: These have come off conquerors *διὰ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀρνίου καὶ διὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς μαρτυρίας αὐτῶν*, i. e. 'through, or by means of, the blood of the Lamb, and through the influence of that word which they have testified.' So again in Rev. 20: 4, the Apocalyptist sees, on thrones in heaven, "the souls of those who had been beheaded *διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ καὶ διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ*; where the meaning, *on account of the testimony*, etc., cannot possibly be mistaken. These instances, and the relation of them all to one and the same subject, render *διά* in Rev. 1: 9 so clear, that doubt seems to be out of place. And this further objection may be made to Lücke's exegesis, viz. that it represents John as going to Patmos either for the sake of publishing the gospel there, or for the sake of writing the Apocalypse; both of which designs are wholly improbable. That bleak and desolate spot, which is scarcely noticed by any geographer of antiquity, and never could have had anything but a few fishermen's huts upon it, was not a very attractive place to go for the sake of preaching, compared with Asia Minor and the adjacent islands swarming with a population which could hardly be numbered. And to go there *for the sake of writing the Apocalypse!* It is surely one of the last places which an author could think of, at least on the score of comfort or convenience. Besides this, John states in the beginning of the same verse (v. 9), that he was a companion of other Christians *ἐν θλίψει . . . καὶ ὑπομονῇ*, which stands so connected with his being in Patmos, as to show that he was there *ἐν θλίψει*, or as an exile, on account of the gospel. This, it cannot well be denied, is the plain and natural implication of the passage.

From these considerations taken together we naturally come to the conclusion, that the clause *ὃς ἐμαρτύρησεν . . . Ἰ. Χριστοῦ* is epexegetical, descriptive of the particular John just mentioned, and intended to distinguish him from others of the same name. We may also note, that inasmuch as *λόγον θεοῦ* is in itself only a kind of *generic* declaration, so *μαρτυρίαν Ἰ. Χριστοῦ* is here added, in order to show that *Christian* doctrine is what the writer particularly intends to designate.

That John, then, who had been a preacher of the Gospel, that John who had declared and openly published the Gospel, was the servant of Christ to whom the symbols of the revelation that follows were disclosed. Nothing more can be drawn with certainty from the text, than this *generic* sense; for if we refer to Rev. 20: 4, "The souls of those, who had been beheaded *διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ, καὶ διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ*," surely we cannot say that none had been beheaded except such as had

written Gospels or Epistles; nor can the expression there be limited even to teachers and preachers. But then there is some difference between that case and the one in Rev. 1: 2; for in this latter we have the verb ἐμαρτύρησεν, which of course designates *publication, declaration, open proclamation* of the divine word, and can be applied only to preaching, teaching, or writing. But to which of these the writer means to apply it, cannot be determined by anything that he here says. Of the fact, however, that John wrote the Apocalypse before he wrote his Gospel, (in case he was the author of both), there can now, I think, be no reasonable ground of doubt. *Evangelium* POSTEA *scripsit*, says Victorinus († 302) in the earliest Commentary on the Apocalypse that we have, i. e. *after* his residence at Patmos, as the context shows; Bib. Max. Patrum, III. p. 418, *C*. And although the little book of Victorinus comes to us probably in a somewhat mutilated and garbled state, yet the expression quoted seems in all probability to be a part of the genuine work. At all events, it agrees well with what the laws of criticism would seem to decide or to require.

Putting all these considerations together it appears to be sufficiently plain, that John is here described as a *teacher* or *preacher* of the divine word, and of that word as disclosed by the Gospel = the testimony of Jesus Christ. But whether it was the *apostle* John—the same who was the author of the Gospel and the Epistles—seems not to be decided by the declarations under consideration. There is, indeed, nothing in them which contradicts this, or is incongruous with it; but still, it must be confessed, there is nothing which decides with certainty in favour of it. If now the Gospel and Epistles were *subsequent* works, (of which I cannot doubt), how could they be referred to in this passage as being already extant?

Ὅσα εἶδε, and not ὅσα τε εἶδε as the Vulgate text reads, and as many critics have also read. For their purpose this was a convenient reading; for some of them made three distinct declarations of this and the two preceding clauses; viz. first, John wrote the Gospel; secondly, he wrote the Epistles; and thirdly, he wrote the Apocalypse, which last, they say, is here appropriately described as containing ὅσα εἶδε, i. e. the visions and symbols disclosed to John. But the τε, on which this *distinction* is mainly built, was long ago rejected even by Bengel; and since that time, by all the critical editions. The Mss. leave us no good room to doubt as to the reading ὅσα εἶδε; for A. B. C. 7. 8. 9. 12. 14. 25. 26. 30. 32. 33. 42, all the Mss. of Matthaei, one of Alter, six of Birch, and the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic (Erp.), Coptic, Aethiopic, and Armenian versions all omit it. Ewald contends for τε; but it is because he construes the preceding declarations as amounting merely to an as-

sertion, that John was a public and open *professor* of the Christian religion, and then ὅσα τε εἶδε means, that [*he declared*] *whatever he saw*, i. e. what he had been an eye-witness of. This is a forced construction, to say the least; and inasmuch as the whole book of the Apocalypse nowhere else offers us a single τε, with any good evidence of its genuineness, (τε in Rev. 21: 12 is generally rejected), so it would be acting against the laws of evidence and of internal probability to admit it here.

I have joined ὅσα εἶδε with ἐσήμανε as *object;* but if the reader prefers to make it merely an explanatory clause, in apposition with λόγον θεοῦ and μαρτυρίαν *I. Χριστοῦ*, then the whole clause will designate John as testifying the divine word, even the gospel of Christ, in all the extent to which it was disclosed to him. In this case εἶδον would parallelize exactly with the Hebrew חָזָה, when applied to a prophet (the old designation of whom was חֹזֶה, *a seer*), which חָזָה stands connected at times with דָּבָר, e. g. Is. 2: 1; so that חָזָה דָּבָר, and εἶδε λόγον θεοῦ would be exactly parallel expressions. The *possibility* of this construction I would not be understood to deny. But the other one which I have given, inasmuch as it assigns a definite object to ἐσήμανε, and therefore makes the whole sense of the passage run smoothly and congruously, I must prefer.

One remark more should be added in reference to the Aor. ἐμαρτύρησε. Why does John here employ this indefinite Praeterite, if by λόγον θεοῦ and μαρτυρίαν *I. Χριστοῦ* he means to designate the book itself of the Apocalypse, or at any rate the *revelation* contained in it which was yet to be written? Lücke, who supposes this to be the case (Stud. und Krit. IX. p. 658), accounts for it by saying, that to the ἀναγινώσκων and the ἀκούοντες (v. 3), the act of writing the book was *past*, and so John could employ ἐμαρτύρησε. Yet the writer of John's Gospel, even after he had completed his whole work, speaking of himself in the last clause of it as having performed this labour, calls himself ὁ μαρτυρῶν *he who testifies*, thus using the *present* tense. So, plainly, would the writer have done in Rev. 1: 2, had he referred there to the written Apocalypse which follows in the sequel; for how could he say, in the very outset of the work, that he *had* written it? Even if we suppose the preface to have been last written (as is usually the case), yet it must not wear that appearance when written; otherwise it would be no *preface* to the book. Besides this, John himself, near the close of this very book, speaks of himself as 'ὁ ἀκούων καὶ βλέπων the things contained in it,' 22: 8. It would be unnatural, therefore, for the writer to employ the Aorist in v. 2, in case his meaning were such a one as Lücke advocates. But the Aorist, in reference to his past preaching and teaching, is quite in its proper place here; for that the Aorist frequently de-

signates actions in the past time that *were accustomed to be done*, or *were often repeated*, is now acknowledged by all leading grammarians, and is indeed easily established by reference to frequent usage.*

(3) Blessed is he who readeth, and they who hear, the words of this prophecy, and keep in mind the things written therein, for the time is near.

The *manner* of the declaration will at once be understood by adverting simply to the custom in ancient times, when very few private copies of the Scriptures existed, of reading them in public, and thus making them known to the mass of the people. Ἀναγινώσκων here refers to a public reader; οἱ ἀκούοντες to those who listened to him, i. e. to the mass of the people. Sentiment: 'Happy are all who possess a knowledge of what is revealed in this prophetical book!' *Λόγους, the things said.* Τῆς προφητείας, *of this prophecy*, where τῆς is emphatic, and therefore equivalent to our demonstrative *this*; and προφητείας is the same as ἀποκάλυψιν above, for τῆς has an evident reference to it. It is also equivalent to ὅσα εἶδε.

Τηροῦντες, *keeping in mind*, i. e. remembering and pondering upon. So the Hebrew שָׁמַר, which is often rendered διατηρέω by the Septuagint, e. g. in Gen. 17: 9. 37: 11. Num. 28: 2 al. See Ges. Lex. No. 2. It is also true, that τηρέω may mean *keep* in the sense of observing and obeying, for such is the case with שָׁמַר; but this sense is not altogether apposite here, inasmuch as the προφητεία before us consists mainly of *predictions* and not of precepts.

Ὁ γὰρ καιρὸς ἐγγύς, *for the time*, i. e. the appropriate and ordained pe-

* Winer (Gramm. § 41, 5. b. 1, 4th ed.) seems to deny such a sense of the Aorist in the New Testament, viz. that of marking *customary* or *often repeated* action in the past time, and manifests an inclination to limit the Aorist in the New Testament to marking only brief, temporary, and soon completed action. But we may open the New Testament almost anywhere, and find reason to call such an opinion in question; e. g. John 4: 12, ἔπιε, i. e. Jacob *habitually drunk* and so his children, and his flocks; 4: 20, "Our fathers προσεκύνησαν, *were accustomed to worship*, or *habitually worshipped* in this mountain, etc.;" 5: 29, οἱ ποιήσαντες, *they who have persevered in doing good*; ib. οἱ δὲ τὰ φαῦλα πραξάντες, *they who have persevered in doing evil*; 6: 31, ἔδωκεν, *often and for a long time he gave* them bread; and so in many cases. Rost (Gramm. § 166. Anm. 4) very forcibly illustrates this from the classics: "Most critics enjoin upon the citizens not to steal, etc. . . but if any one transgress, ἐπέθεσαν, *they were accustomed to inflict* a penalty upon him;" "Socrates ἐδίδαξε, *was accustomed to teach* his disciples without any reward;" "The Persians ἐπολέμησαν, *usually made war* with readiness and boldness;" "Many things ἔτεσε, *have often happened* to men beyond their expectation." Indeed this principle is generally recognized by all distinguished grammarians at the present time; see Kühner, Gramm. II. § 442. And such being the case, ἐμαρτύρησεν, in Rev. 1: 2 is altogether in place, as designating the past habitude of John in publishing or teaching the Gospel.

riod, מוֹצֵד, *is near at hand.* In what sense this is to be understood, has already been discussed under *ἐν τάχει* of v. 1.

SALUTATION AND INTRODUCTION. I. 3—20.

To the seven churches of *proconsular* Asia is the work which the writer has undertaken inscribed. The names of these (1: 11) is a pledge for the importance of the churches addressed. Whether the churches of that day in Asia were limited to this number, is a question easily solved; for in Col. 4: 13 the church at Hierapolis is mentioned in connection with that at Laodicea, and the former is in the near neighbourhood of the latter. Colossae, also, was in the immediate neighbourhood of Laodicea. All three were on the confines of Phrygia and Lydia, and belonged, no doubt, to the circle of proconsular Asia. So, a few years later than when the Apocalypse was written, we know there were large and flourishing churches in Tralles where Ignatius lived, and at Magnesia in its near neighbourhood, both in Lydia and but a moderate distance from Ephesus. Whether the Apocalyptist was conversant with these, and with many other churches of Asia besides those mentioned in the Revelation, cannot be decided by express evidence; but the probability surely is, that such a man as John, (whether apostle or other preacher of the gospel), would not have founded, or formed acquaintance with, *seven* churches only in Asia, when the whole region was filled with cities and an immense population. There must be other reasons, then, why only *seven* churches are here addressed; and these will be the subject of discussion in the sequel when we come to v. 11.

ASIA is a name to which very different meanings are attached, by different writers and at different periods of time. It means, (1) The whole eastern Continent. (2) Hither Asia or Asia Minor, from the Sinus Issicus and Armenia Minor to the Aegean Sea. (3) That part of Asia which Attalus III, king of Pergamus, gave by testament to the Romans, i. e. Mysia, Phrygia, Lycaonia, Lydia, Caria, Pisidia, and the southern coast, i. e. all the western, south-western, and southern parts of Asia Minor. (4) In the New Testament, the western coast from Mysia downwards, with the inland country to a considerable distance back, comprehending the western part of Phrygia, appears to be named *Asia;* and this tract constituted *proconsular Asia*, in the narrow meaning of that appellation. The last is possibly the meaning in the text. See Usher, Diatribe *De Asia Proconsulari.*

To the churches addressed, John gives the usual Christian salutation so common in the epistles of Paul, and elsewhere:

(4) John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him who is, and was, and is to come.

Χάρις, favour, benevolence or *beneficence*, viz. on the part of God, who bestows blessings. The sense is optative or precative. Then *εἰρήνη* = שָׁלוֹם, i. e. *peaceful security and enjoyment, tranquil happiness;* and both of these in the full sense, (for such doubtless was the writer's mind), that is, in a sense which respects things temporal and spiritual. Only this enlarged meaning can answer the demands of the passage.

Ἀπὸ ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος. In the vulgate text *τοῦ* is inserted after *ἀπό*; but it is supported by no adequate authority, and is evidently a gloss of some copyist, who sought for a palpable index of the Genitive case after the preposition *ἀπό*. The peculiar construction of the whole clause is manifest at first sight. The words following *ἀπό* are all taken together as one indeclinable noun, corresponding to and expressive of the Hebrew word יְהוָה, *Jehovah*, which is indeclinable, i. e. admits of no variation of form. Whatever may have been the origin of this Hebrew appellation, i. e. whether it be purely of Hebrew etymology, or, as some have maintained, a foreign word expressive of supreme Godhead, and adopted by the Hebrews (with some slight variation which conforms it to the genius of their language), still it is certain, that at a very early period יְהוָה was considered as expressive of the God *which exists always*, and was regarded as connected with the verb הָיָה or חָיָה, *to be*. So in Ex. 3: 14; Moses had inquired (v. 13) 'by what name he should announce the God of the Hebrews to his nation,' and he is answered: "אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה, *I am that I am* . . . tell them that אֶהְיֶה has sent you to them." Here, as Jehovah himself speaks, he employs the *first* person of the future tense of הָיָה instead of the third, which would be יִהְיֶה or (from חָיָה = הָיָה) יַחֲיֶה. The manner of this address seems therefore to take it for granted, that הָיָה or חָיָה is the root of the word יְהוָה. Theodoret (Quaest. 15 in Ex.) testifies that the Samaritans pronounced the name יְהוָה as *IABE*, i. e. יַחֲוֶה *yahve*, (*B* being soft, as he read it, like our English V); while he says (ibid.) that the Hebrews called it *IAΩ* (*Yaō*). How he came by such a knowledge of the *ὄνομα ἀνεκφώνητον, ἄφραστον, ἀπόῤῥητον*, as he himself and Eusebius call it, it would be difficult to say; but he speaks confidently, and would seem to know what he affirms. But let the pronunciation be as it may, the word יְהוָה is *indeclinable;* and John has imitated this, in the expression before us. *Ὁ ὤν*, is *he who now exists; ὁ ἦν*, is *he who has existed*, the verb itself (in the Praeterite) being here employed, because there is no form of a participle praeterite which could be joined with the article; while *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* = הַבָּא, means *qui futurus est, he who is to come* or *is to be*. The Greek verb *εἰμί* affords indeed a *future* participle, viz. *ἐσόμενος*; but then the Hebrew verb הָיָה has properly none such, and therefore הַבָּא is used in the place of it, which our text imitates. So, often in the New Testament, where we find, in order to signify *that which is future* or *that which will be*, the word *come* (*ἔρχομαι*) employed; e. g. days to come, world to come, kingdom of God to come, good and evil to come, wrath to come, etc. etc.

John then wishes that grace and peace from Jehovah, i. e. the *self-existent* and *eternal* God, may be given to the churches whom he addresses. Evidently his periphrastic designation of the word *Jehovah* implies thus

much; nor can there be any good reason to doubt, that in the time when the Apocalypse was written, it was customary among the Jews to regard such a meaning as connected with the word יְהוָה. Early Jewish writings confirm this view. Thus Targ. Jon. on Deut. 32: 39, Ego ille qui est, et qui fuit, et qui erit . . . Annon pater unus? Et ipse fuit, et ipse est, et ipse erit. Targ. Hieros. in Ex. 3: 14, Qui fuit, est, et erit, dixit mundo. More of the same nature from the later Rabbins may be found in Schoettgenii Hor. Heb. in loc. Even among the heathen we find some striking descriptions of the Godhead, which are of a similar nature. Plutarch (De Is. et Osir. p. 354), speaking of a temple of Isis at Saïs in Egypt, says: "It bore this inscription: *Ἐγώ εἰμι πᾶν τὸ γεγονός, καὶ ὂν, καὶ ἐσόμενον· καὶ τὸν ἐμὸν πέπλον οὐδείς πω θνητῶν ἀπεκάλυψεν.* So Orpheus (in auctor. Lib. de Mundo): *Ζεὺς κεφαλή, Ζεὺς μέσσα, Διὸς δ' ἐκ πάντα τέτυκται.* More striking still is the resemblance in Pausanias (Phocic. 12): *Ζεὺς ἦν, Ζεύς ἐστι, Ζεὺς ἔσσεται, ὦ μέγαλε Ζεῦ!*

Striking as this is, however, we are not obliged to suppose, that the Hebrews borrowed the name *Jehovah* from the heathen, nor their modes of reasoning in regard to its significance. The thought is natural to a reflecting mind, that an eternal Being must have existed in time past, that he now exists, and will continue to exist. No wonder then that יְהוָה, *der Seyende* (as the Germans say), i. e. *the Exister* (if I may so express it), was used as a most significant name of the eternal and self-existent God. That the Hebrews sometimes formed proper names from the future tense of a verb, is well known; and in the present case, if יִהְיֶה, as Ewald and Hitzig confidently suppose, was the true pronunciation of the word, all is plain; for this form is a Hiph. Future, and means *He who causes existence*. That the vowels which are connected with this name at present, in the Hebrew Scriptures, are not the original and proper ones, seems to be quite certain; for the present vowels are always the appropriate ones to אֲדֹנָי or אֱלֹהִים; and in one of these ways, that is by using one of these appellations, the Jews always read or pronounce the name יהוה. From time immemorial they have done so; for the Septuagint version almost always renders יהוה by *Κύριος* = אֲדֹנָי, and Philo, Josephus, Theodoret, and Eusebius, with the Rabbins, all bear testimony that the true sound of the name was never uttered, except in the temple; Bib. Repos. I. p. 739. This gives us a ground why John has adopted the periphrasis in Rev. 1: 4. The direct name יהוה he did not choose to pronounce, even if he had ever heard it. He was unwilling thus to shock the feelings of his Jewish readers. The name *κύριος* he did not select, in this case, because it fell below the significancy which he wished to exhibit. Consequently he employed a periphrasis for יהוה, that was common among his readers, and would be perfectly understood by them.

The reader who wishes to see properly exposed the attempts of several recent writers, to show that the name יְהוָה was borrowed by the Hebrews from some of the *heathen* nations, is referred to an Essay of Tholuck on this subject, translated and printed in the Bib. Repos. IV. p. 89 seq.; where the author has not only made out his own position in a triumphant manner, but reduced his opponents to straits which will alternately excite the indignation and perhaps the contempt of some readers. That the Hebrews might coin such an expressive name as *Jehovah*,

is sufficiently evident from the fact, that other nations have done things of the like nature; e. g. the Zend language calls God *Kuadâta*, i. e. *a se datus*, or self-existent; and the Sanscrit employs *Svayamdata*, i. e. the originator of his own existence. Did the Hebrews know less of God than the old Parsees, or the authors of the antiquated Sanscrit?

(5) And from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth; — to him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood.

Καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἑπτὰ πνευμάτων . . . θρόνου αὐτοῦ. Three opinions respecting this passage deserve consideration; (1) It means *God*, a most perfect Spirit. (2) It means the *Holy Spirit*, endowed with a most perfect nature. (3) It means the *seven archangels*, or presence-angels, who stand near the throne of God, and are (so to speak) prime ministers in the execution of his will.

(1) GOD. Eichhorn paraphrases the verse thus: "A Jehova, naturâ perfectissimâ." His basis of argument is, that 'God is called *πνεῦμα*; and then, in reference to the various and different powers or influences which he exerts, he is "sine ullo discrimine" called *πνεύματα*; Comm. p. 16 seq. As to the first affirmation, it is true that God is called *πνεῦμα*, John 4: 24; but this is only in reference to his pneumatic or immaterial nature. The Spirit of God, as the third person in the Trinity, does not here come into consideration; inasmuch as Eichhorn's position is a generic, and not a specific one.—As to the other position, that 'God is called *πνεύματα sine ullo discrimine*,' I know of no passage in the Bible to justify such an assertion.

His second ground of proof is, that 'the Jews so construed Is. 11: 2 as to make *seven spirits* out of it, all of which belong to the divine nature.' But there the spirits mentioned are expressly affirmed to belong to the *Messiah*. Whence the proof is to come, that the Jews formed out of this passage the notion that *God* consists of seven spirits, I know not. I have searched in vain for it. The oldest evidence of the Cabbalistic interpretation of the Jews, is generally admitted to be the Zohar; certainly Cabbalism rests mainly on this work. Whether this work is in fact as old as the Mishna, as some have supposed, or even older, must be regarded as very doubtful, when any one reads the Mishna and finds it so full of superstitions and hair-splitting conceits, and yet partaking little or nothing of the spirit of Cabbalism. As the Zohar *now* is, there are parts of it, beyond all question, of modern date; see Nordheimer in Bib. Repos. of 1839. No. IV. p. 14 (for 272). But conceding the antiquity of the great mass of it, we shall still look to it in vain for the doctrine which Eichhorn asserts. Schoettgen, deeply versed in literature of this kind and not a mere gleaner like Eichhorn, in his Horae Heb. (II. p. 262), has produced four different passages

from the Zohar, all of which assert, that *four* spirits belong to the *Messiah* (not to God), founding this opinion on Is. 11: 2, where the word רוּחַ, *spirit*, occurs only four times. Again, a solitary passage he produces from the same work, which ascribes *seven* spirits to the Messiah.

But how all this can prove that the Jews of John's time were accustomed to ascribe *seven* spirits to *God*, one cannot well see. Beyond all reasonable question, the Zohar and all the Cabbalistic books are much later than the Apocalypse; and there is certainly no evidence in this latter book of speculations resembling those of the Cabbalists. There is nothing which at first view seems apparently to be of this nature, that cannot be accounted for on a different ground. And of the same opinion is Ewald, Comm. p. 90.

Should the appeal be made here (as it has often been), to the Cabbalistic doctrine of the Sephiroth (סְפִירוֹת), i. e. the personification of the divine attributes, this will answer no purpose on the present occasion; for the Sephiroth were not *seven* but TEN; all of which stand on the ground of equality in respect to *rank*, although not exactly so as to order. The fiction of the Sephiroth is briefly this. To the divine Being, simply considered, the generic appellation אֵין סוֹף, *without end*, i. e. the Infinite One, is given. Then to him are ascribed parts or attributes, which are arranged so as to make out a kind of figure or form like to that of a man. First comes כֶּתֶר, *crown*, representing the head; then חָכְמָה *wisdom* and בִּינָה *intelligence*, the two eyes; then גְּדוּלָה *greatness* and גְּבוּרָה *might*, i. e. the shoulders and arms; then תִּפְאֶרֶת *ornament*, girdle magnificently adorned; then נֵצַח *splendour* and הוֹד *majesty*, i. e. the loins bedecked with glittering weapons; then יְסוֹד *foundation*, i. e. feet, and מַלְכוּת *kingdom*, which is the footstool, i. e. under his feet or subject to him. Such are the Sephiroth; but that all this is entirely remote from the passage under consideration, is plain enough. Compare Note in Dr. Laurence's Book of Enoch, p. 44, edit. 2.

By what then are we to be persuaded, that John meant to describe the Godhead here, when he employed the phrase *seven angels before his throne?* The very nature of the case decides against such a supposition; for how would the text then run? In substance thus: *Grace and peace . . . from God, and from God.* I will not say that repetition of a nature somewhat similar to this never occurs; but I would say, that I know of no instance like to this in all the *salutations* of the New Testament. It would be incongruous. But if this is not enough, then we may at least be permitted to ask one question more: What means the adjunct clause—*which are before his throne?* Are God's attributes, then, not *in* himself, but standing *before* his throne? If there is anything in all the Zohar that exceeds the incongruity of such a supposi-

tion, let it be produced. And this adjunct clause seems to make a final decision of this question. The *seven spirits* are at least something diverse from ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος.

It is a matter of some surprise, therefore, to find a writer so sharp-sighted and independent of masters as Ewald, leaning here, as he does, to the views of Eichhorn. More still, to find him laying down the like positions about the early views of the Jews, in regard to God as a *Spiritus septiformis*, (to which Lücke also assents Einl. p. 386), without a single appeal to testimony in order to establish it; excepting that he refers us to the seven eyes of Jehovah which run to and fro through the whole earth, Zech. 3: 9. 4: 10. But this is entirely of a different nature; the seven eyes are obviously a designation of the *παρουσία* of Jehovah, and the running to and fro through the whole earth designates his universal inspection. So in the Apocalypse (5: 6), the Lamb has seven eyes and seven horns, emblematic of the seven spirits of God which he sends forth into all the earth; which representation, although it has for its basis the passage in Zechariah, is still employed in a manner specifically different. So also the *beast* has seven heads, Rev. 13: 1; and in a like way seven is employed often in the Apocalypse, and (I may add) throughout the Scriptures. But in all these cases the seven eyes, or heads, or horns, belong to the individual being who is named in connection with them; they do not *stand before his throne*. More to Ewald's purpose would have been an appeal to Prov. 8: 30, where eternal Wisdom is personified, and represented as אֵצְלוֹ, *near to him*, i. e. to Jehovah, and *always rejoicing before him*. But here, again, simply participation and aid in the counsels and doings of Jehovah are designated by the phraseology in question. Less than what is said could not be said, if the personification is to be carried through. In the case before us, if the writer had meant to designate Jehovah as possessing seven spirits, i. e. attributes, it is obvious he would have said, *even from Him who hath the seven spirits*, i. e. possesses all perfect spiritual attributes; in which case, too, the ἀπό must have been left out, for this discriminates and marks separate objects. We may dismiss this exegesis then with the conviction, that it is incongruous and altogether unsupported.

(2) The Holy Spirit. This interpretation is defended by Vitringa and many others. It has at least a better claim than the preceding one, inasmuch as it would free the passage from tautology, and would signify that all the persons of the Godhead are addressed in the pious supplication or desire of the writer; and thus it would fully harmonize with 2 Cor. 13: 14. To confirm this view Vitringa appeals to Rev. 4: 5, where the seven spirits of God are said to be *seven lamps burning before his throne*. 'These,' says he (Comm. p. 15), 'must be something

in Deo not *extra Deum*, for they are that which enables him to see.' Hence he concludes, that they must be the *Spirit of God;* and by analogy the same thing may be said of the seven spirits in Rev. 1: 5. But in regard to the *seven lamps*, they are said to be burning *before* the throne of God, not within him; directly contrary to the assumption of Vitringa, and showing plainly that the seven spirits are called *seven lamps*, because they are all-splendid and glorious, like the שְׂרָפִים in Is. 6: 1, and like the living creatures (חַיּוֹת) in Ezek. 1: 13, who are expressly said to be *like lamps*.—Vitringa further appeals to Is. 11: 2, where seven spirits are ascribed to Christ; but the appeal is inapposite, because there he is represented as *possessing* them, and they are not said, as here, to *stand before his throne*. Last of all he employs the *a priori* argument: 'Is it probable, that John would have omitted the Holy Spirit and inserted only angels, in such a passage as this?' But what if we should ask: Is it probable that in all the benedictions of Paul, or of the New Testament, the Holy Spirit should be included only once? What answer must be given we know, for we find the Holy Spirit mentioned in such a connection but *once*. In a great majority of the cases, only the Saviour is included in the benedictions. How then can a matter of this nature be decided by an argument *a priori?*

Moreover, may we not well ask: Did it comport with John's views of the nature of the Holy Spirit, to represent him as *subordinate*, and as standing before the throne of God in the attitude of waiting for his commands? There is nothing of this in the Bible. We do, indeed, often read of God's *sending* his Spirit; and also of his *sending* his Son; but never, of either as placed simply in the attitude of his ministering servants. Christ, after his incarnation, might well be represented as being *sent;* but the Logos and the Holy Spirit, considered simply as divine, i. e. as belonging to the Godhead, cannot, without degradation, be represented as in the waiting attitude of servants.

We come then from the necessity of the case to a *third* meaning, viz. that of ATTENDING or MINISTERING PRESENCE-ANGELS.

Among the ancient fathers not a few embraced this view; such as Clemens Alex., Andreas of Cesarea, and others. So among the moderns, Valla, Beza, Drusius, Hammond, and many others. It was not an opinion, then, introduced merely by adherents to the Romish custom of making intercession to the angels. We shall see in the sequel, that it does by no means lead to the establishment of such a doctrine respecting intercession. That *presence-angels* are here designated, is the interpretation which I adopt; and this for reasons which may be briefly stated.

(*a*) The nature of the whole expression, as has already been indica-

ted, favours this view. The seven spirits *before his throne*, naturally means those who stand in his presence, waiting his commands in the attitude of ministering servants; see and compare Rev. 4: 5. 7: 9, 15. 8: 2. 11: 4, 16. 12: 10. 14: 3. 20: 12, which passages, although not all of the same tenor with the text before us, still decide that those who are *before* the throne are different from those *on* the throne.

(*b*) Several passages in the Revelation go directly to confirm the opinion in question. E. g. Apoc. 8: 2, "I saw τοὺς ἑπτὰ ἀγγέλους, who stand before God." This is the first mention of these seven angels, which occurs after the introduction to the book. The article τούς of course designates here *the well-known* seven angels, i. e. archangels or presence-angels, which the reader was expected readily to recognize. Such a meaning is unavoidable, under such circumstances.—Here also, I cannot doubt, is to be ranked the passage in Rev. 4: 5, where the seven lamps burning before the throne, are said to be τὰ ἑπτὰ πνεύματα τοῦ θεοῦ, i. e. *the* seven spirits.

If the question be raised, as it has been, 'whether πνεύματα can be applied to angels', the answer is not difficult. Any lexicon or concordance of the New Testament will satisfy the reader at once, that πνεῦμα and πνεύματα, usually with some adjective or participle qualifying them, but sometimes without, are very often employed to designate the devil and his angels. That *good* angels may be designated by πνεύματα, is certain from Heb. 1: 14. So in Rev. 3: 1. 4: 5. 5: 6, where, if any one should suppose that the word πνεύματα designates the *attributes* of Christ, he may see that this is quite improbable; for in Rev. 3: 1, ἔχων τὰ ἑπτὰ πνεύματα τοῦ θεοῦ is joined with καὶ τοὺς ἑπτὰ ἀστέρας, i. e. the seven churches, and thus it is manifest that ἔχων is here employed, not in the sense of *possessing* as an attribute, but of *having* or *holding the disposal of* that which is named as the object following this participle. So in Rev. 4: 5, 'the seven πνεύματα are *the seven lamps* (i. e. resplendent or glorious beings), which *stand before the throne of God*;' and so in Rev. 5: 6, 'the seven spirits *are sent forth into all the earth*.' That Jewish usage permitted good angels to be called πνεύματα, is plain moreover from Josephus, who says: ἄγγελος . . . θεῖον πνεῦμα, Antiq. IV. 6. 3.

All the passages just cited from the Apocalypse serve to show, that THE SEVEN ANGELS was a familiar idea with the writer. And that, in this respect, he only followed the common *usus loquendi* of his time, may be satisfactorily shown. Thus the book of Tobit, one of the earliest, most simple, and attractive, of all the apocryphal books (12: 15), introduces Raphael as saying: "I am . . . *one of the seven angels* . . . who enter into the presence of the glory of the Holy One." The Book of Enoch (ch. xx.) gives the seven names of the angels *who*

watch, i. e. of the עִירִין, *the watchers* or the holy presence-angels, so called because they stand in the attitude of watchers or waiting for the divine commands, or perhaps because they perform the part of guardian angels (comp. Matt. 18: 10). The designation is evidently taken from Dan. 4: 10, 14, 20. (Eng. vers. 13, 17, 23.) This same word, *watchers*, is familiarly employed in the Syriac liturgies for *guardian-angels*, or *archangels* (ܥܝܪ̈ܝܢ). So in the Book of Enoch, in the Greek translation given by Syncellus, (Laurence, p. 187), angels both good and bad are called Ἐγρήγοροι, *watchers;* see also Enoch, chap. xx. as quoted above. Nor is this idea of seven archangels confined merely to the Hebrews. We find seven *Amshaspends*, or archangels, in the theosophy of Zoroaster; see Kleuker's Zendavesta, I. Th. II. p. 189, where their seven names are given in the Zend language. All this evidence of general usage from books antecedent to the Apocalypse, or nearly contemporary with it, helps to confirm the idea, that John spoke in accordance with such usage.

It may be proper moreover to remark, that whatever the number of archangels or presence-angels may have actually been, conformity to plan of the book throughout would lead the author here to mention only *seven*. The churches addressed are but seven; and the idea of the writer seems plainly to be, that each church had its appropriate guardian angel. Of course *seven* angels are the requisite number. That blessings may be conveyed to the churches whom he salutes, by these guardian angels, the "ministering spirits who are sent forth to minister unto the heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1: 14), the writer expresses, in our text, his fervent wish.

If now it be said, that 'such an interpretation leads to angel-worship, or at least to the invocation of angels;' the answer is, that the Apocalyptist has expressly, and perhaps purposely, guarded us against such a practice in Rev. 19: 10. 22: 9, "See thou do it not!" Or if it should be said, that 'there is no analogy and no example elsewhere of such an invocation as that before us, in case the text should be thus explained;' it would be well for the objector to consult 1 Tim. 5: 21, "I charge thee before God, and Jesus Christ, and *the elect angels*." How comes Paul to class these angels with God and Jesus Christ? Plainly because, considered as presence-angels, they, together with God and Christ, constitute (so to speak) the supreme court of heaven, or that awful judicatory which will take cognizance of all the actions of men. Here now the Holy Spirit is either omitted by Paul, or else impliedly comprised in the word *God;* and the *elect angels* are appealed to as witnesses of the solemn charge which Paul is about to give. And why? Because, as they are "ministering spirits," they watch over and report

all which is done by the professed disciples of Christ. Comp. also Rev. 3: 5. Mark 8: 38. Luke 9: 26. 12: 8, where a similar idea is found. In a light somewhat different, indeed, the Apocalyptist presents them, viz., as *the dispensers of divine blessings to the churches*. But this is altogether a scriptural idea. What he says then is this, viz., It is his fervent desire that the blessings of grace and peace may be bestowed on the seven churches of Asia — blessings which Jehovah dispenses, by his presence-angels, and by the Mediator the Lord Jesus Christ. The definite and specific part which each is to perform in this dispensation of blessings, the writer does not designate; nor was it to his purpose so to do. Enough that this was already understood by his readers; and surely he addressed them as if he supposed them to be acquainted with the subject in general. In fact, an act of direct homage or worship is not necessarily involved in such wishes as the Apocalyptist here expresses. They amount simply to this, viz., that he fervently hopes for and desires the bestowment of important blessings on the seven churches of Asia, on the part of those superior guardians of the churches who are primarily and principally concerned with the bestowment of them. If one should say to an ambassador, appointed to a foreign court: "I heartily wish you a favourable reception from the King and his Counsellors," this would not assert, nor even imply, an equality between the two parties named. Neither does the inclusion of guardian angels in the wish which accompanies the salutation of the author before us, imply that he makes them equal to God and Christ, or the proper object of religious worship.

For a more extended view of the *angelology* of the Scriptures, and of the Apocalypse where angels act so conspicuous a part, I must refer the reader to Excursus I. at the close of this work; and in respect to the use of the number *seven*, in this case, I must refer him to Excursus II. where he will find the symbolical use of numbers somewhat fully discussed.

Ἰησοῦ, the *Saviour*, יֵשׁוּעַ, contracted from יְהוֹשׁוּעַ = *Jehovah will save*. Χριστοῦ, *the anointed One* = מָשִׁיחַ, *Unctus*, referring to the ceremony of consecration to the office of king or priest by anointing. In the New Testament it refers, as it would seem, specially to the office of *king* or κύριος; in accordance with the usage in Ps. 2: 2, 6. It is this office or dignity, which is the predominant theme of the Messianic Psalms, e. g. Ps. ii. viii. xlv. cx. etc. Also of Dan. 7: 13, 14, and many other passages. Here Χριστοῦ stands connected with πρωτότοκος and ἄρχων, both indicative of *supremacy*, i. e. the Saviour, the Anointed One, means the lawfully constituted supreme Lord and King.

Ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός, *the faithful witness*, i. e. one on whose testimony entire reliance may be placed. Πιστός, *faithful, worthy of credit, to be*

confided in. *Μάρτυς*, not *martyr* in the modern sense, although in fact Christ might be called a martyr to the truth, but here, in reference to v. 2, *μάρτυς* means *one who gives testimony, one who declares* or *makes disclosures:* see on *ἐμαρτύρησε* under v. 2. What the writer means is, that Jesus Christ, who *discloses* or *testifies* the things contained in the Revelation which follows, is worthy of all credit. Ewald applies *πιστός* specially to *the keeping* of the promises made in the Apocalypse; but this is surely a singular mode of construing *πιστός* here, for it plainly qualifies *μάρτυς*, and *μάρτυς* means *one who declares* or *discloses*. For what other purpose can *πιστός* be designed, except to signify that what the witness declares is worthy of credit or confidence?

Inasmuch as *ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός* is here in apposition with *Ἰ. Χριστοῦ*, we might expect the Genitive instead of the Nominative case. Eichhorn says that the present construction is *contra linguae Graecae analogiam;* but that it is by no means unfrequent, may be seen by consulting Vol. I. § 15. 1. N. Test. Gramm. § 97. 5. Bernhardy's Syntax, p. 68 seq. See also Kühner's Gramm. § 508. 2. Eichhorn in order to rectify the writer's Greek, proposes *ὅς ἐστιν ὁ μάρτυς* instead of the present text; which at least is unnecessary.

Ὁ πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν. The vulgate text has *ἐκ* here; but without due authority of Mss. It is indeed a more facile reading, and is exhibited by Paul in Col. 1: 18, *πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν*. The only question of difficulty is, whether the writer means to say, that of all who had died Christ is the most distinguished, i. e. the leader or chief; or whether he means to say, that he is first and preeminent among all who are raised, or are to be raised, from the dead, or, in other words, that he takes the lead in the resurrection and precedes all others in point of rank. The mere form of the expression would favour the former sense; and for such a use of *πρωτότοκος* one might compare Rom. 8: 29, and also Heb. 12: 23 where it is applied to the preeminence of the church in general. For the latter meaning we may appeal to Col. 1: 18, and to the usage of *ἀνάστασις* in connection with *νεκρῶν* as a Gen. following it. Thus we have *ἀνάστασις ἐκ νεκρῶν* in Luke 20: 35. Acts 4: 2. 17: 31; but *ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν* in Matt. 22: 31. Acts 17: 32. 24: 21. 26: 23. Rom. 1: 4. 1 Cor. 15: 12, 13, 21, 42. Heb. 6: 2; and both formulas are used substantially in the same sense. Indeed there can scarcely be any doubt, that the writer has here in view an exhibition of Christ as a risen and living Saviour, who has already led the way in that glorious resurrection on which the sequel of the book so much insists. Compare the like shade of thought in Rev. 2: 8, *ὃς ἐγένετο νεκρός, καὶ ἔζησε*. So Paul 1 Cor. 15: 20, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become *ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων*." *Ἀπαρχή* is employed by Paul in the same sense as *πρωτότοκος* by John; with the exception, that there is in *πρω-*

τότοκος a metaphorical meaning which refers to *birth*, i. e. to such a restoration of life as may be compared with a birth. So in Rev. 20: 4, 5, also in 2: 8, *ζάω* is repeatedly applied to *reviviscence*. John then means to say, that Christ is the first of all the dead, on whom a *resurrection-life* (sit venia!) had been bestowed, and that among all such he holds and will hold the preeminence; just as primogeniture among the Hebrews designated, at the same time, priority of birth and priority of privilege. And if any one should object, that the Old Testament Scripture and the New present us with several cases of resurrection antecedent to that of Christ, this objection would be of no validity; for in those cases individuals were raised only to another natural terrestrial life, and they must again be subject to death; whereas death had no more dominion over the risen Saviour . . . 'for in that he lived, he lived unto God,' Rom. 6: 9, 10. So he was in fact *ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων*, and *πρωτότοκος νεκρῶν*, the first who enjoyed the privilege of a resurrection to eternal glory, and at the same time was invested with all the rights of primogeniture, i. e. was constituted leader, *ἄρχων*, of all who would thus be raised from the dead.

Ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς. Here *ἄρχων* designates the *head, leader*, the first in rank, or him who rules over other kings that have a name like his own, but not power like his: comp. Rev. 17: 14. 19: 16. *βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων*; also Ps. ii. xlv. cx. Is. 9: 6, 7. Eph. 1: 22. 4: 15. Phil. 2: 9—11. Col. 1: 15—18. Heb. 1: 2, 3. In our text the kings of the *earth* are named, because a contest with them is disclosed in the sequel of the book, and the victory and supremacy over them are exhibited.

Such are the predicates of the Saviour, whose victories are the theme of the book. The mention of such qualities naturally calls forth a doxology directed to the glorious personage who possesses them.

6. To him who loveth us, and has washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us a kingdom [i. e. kings], priests unto God even his Father—to him be glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen!

The division of verses in the vulgate text is palpably wrong here. Verse 6 should begin as I have marked it; for so the sense clearly indicates.—*Ἀγαπῶντι*, pres. Part., instead of *ἀγαπήσαντι* in the vulgate text, which is without good authority, and does not give so full and emphatic a sense as *ἀγαπῶντι*.

Λούσαντι, in several Codd., and in some of high authority, (also in the Syriac Version), is read *λύσαντι, freed, redeemed*. The sense is good; but the present reading, *λούσαντι*, (from *λούω to wash, purify, cleanse*), is more vivid here, and more in conformity with the Hebrew idiom. Thus in Ps. 51: 4, כַּבְּסֵנִי, *wash me*, i. e. cleanse me, *from mine ini-*

guity. So Ps. 51: 9, and to the same purpose Heb. 10: 22, *ἐῤῥαντισμένοι . . . . ἀπὸ συνειδήσεως πονηρᾶς, purified from an evil conscience.* The primary and literal meaning of *λούσαντι*, I have retained in the version, in order to present the exact image of the original. The usual Jewish rite of purification by blood, however, was performed by *sprinkling*, not by bathing in it. The writer employs *λούσαντι* to designate the abundant or ample purification made by the blood of Christ. As to the efficacy of this blood to purify from sin, comp. the more literal expression in 1 John 1: 7. Heb. 9: 14. 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19, and *ἀπελούσασθε* in 1 Cor. 6: 11. See also Rev. 5: 9. Eph. 1: 7. Col. 1: 14, et al. All the ancient sacrifices, offered in accordance with the Levitical rites, could avail no more than to remove external and ceremonial impurity, and procure temporal pardon. The blood of Christ accomplishes that which they prefigured; see and comp. Heb. 9: 6—10: 14.

Ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτίων, from the impurity, turpitude of sin, and so (by consequence) from its penalty. Thus in Matt. 1: 21, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people *ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτίων αὐτῶν*," i. e. from the power and penalty of their sins. That the blood of Christ shed upon the cross has a purifying and redeeming efficacy—is a truth which constitutes the very essence and peculiarity of Christianity, in distinction from doctrines taught by other religions; many of which doctrines, specially respecting moral and social duties, are substantially like to those of a similar nature in the gospel. That which makes Christianity what it is—a peculiar religion—finds its *nucleus* in the truth here developed.

Καὶ ἐποίησεν . . . βασιλείαν, kingship, i. e. kings, the abstract being put for the concrete, as in a multitude of cases elsewhere in the Scriptures. In respect to the grammatical construction of the clause, it is evident that *ποιήσαντι*—like *ἀγαπῶντι* and *λούσαντι*—would be the normal form. But participles in Hebrew and Greek often commence a sentence, which is continued by a *verb* in a succeeding clause. This is a species of the *oratio variata;* N. Test. Gramm. § 196. Heb. Gramm. § 564. In the later Hebrew this construction abounds peculiarly, e. g. in the book of Daniel; and so also in the later Greek.—*Βασιλείαν* has been introduced instead of the vulgate *βασιλεῖς*, into the critical editions of the New Testament, and is supported by such a weight of external testimony, that it is difficult to decline the admittance of it. Still in Rev. 5: 10, we find without contradiction or variation, *καὶ ἐποίησας αὐτοὺς τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν βασιλεῖς καὶ ἱερεῖς*, giving the same sense in more facile Greek. But as an offset to this, one may appeal to Ex. 19: 6, where God says respecting the Hebrews: "Ye shall be unto me מַמְלֶכֶת כֹּהֲנִים, *a kingdom of priests*"; which the Septuagint have rendered *βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα, a royal priesthood*, and so also Peter, in 1 Pet. 2: 9. This version is defended by Storr (N. Apol. p. 414), and some others; and although

Ewald (in loc.) denies the correctness of such a version, it may be defended by the idiom of the Hebrew, which not unfrequently employs the *first* of two nouns in the construct state as an *adjective*, as well as the latter of them (which is most common), Heb. Gramm. § 440. *b*. If the present critical reading, βασιλείαν, ἱερεῖς, is correct, then has John given a literal translation of the Hebrew words in Ex. 19: 6, construing each word as grammatically independent of the other, or at least not regarding them as in the construct state. In such a case ἱερεῖς is to be considered as epexegetical; and the sense of the passage then would be: 'He has constituted us a kingly order, the members of which are all like priests, i. e. holy and consecrated to the service of God, and in possession of an elevated dignity.' The sense indeed must be substantially the same, whether the vulgate or the critical reading be adopted. The writer means to say, that those who are loved by the Saviour, and have been cleansed by his blood, have been elevated to a high and holy state, like that of kings and priests. That the language is *tropical*, needs scarcely to be suggested; for if all Christians are actually *kings*, who then are their *subjects?* And if all are actually *priests*, where and for whom do they perform hieratic rites? As the literal sense, then, is out of all question, the figurative one becomes a matter of necessity; and such a sense is the one which has already been suggested. If a distinction is to be made between the words *kings* and *priests*, in passages of this nature, (and it is not difficult to make one), then we must regard *kings* as designating the high elevation of Christians, and also the abundance and honours (in a spiritual sense) bestowed upon them; while the appellation *priests* designates their peculiar consecration to God and their holiness of character, and also implies a claim of veneration as due to them. All this is plain to any one, who duly considers the nature of the terms employed and the writer's design in selecting them. Other parts of the Scriptures, also, afford abundant evidence of such a *usus loquendi* among the Jews. Let the reader carefully compare Is. 61: 6. 1 Pet. 2: 5. Rev. 5: 10. 20: 6, as to ἱερεῖς. Then as to βασιλεῖς, comp. Ps. 49: 14, "The upright shall have dominion." Dan. 7: 22, 27. Matt. 19: 28. Luke 22: 29, 30. 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3. 2 Tim. 2: 12. Rev. 2: 26, 27. 3: 21. *Literal* we may suppose such phrases to be, only when we come to the conclusion, that all the language employed by the Scriptures respecting God and heaven, must be literally interpreted. And if the writer in the present case meant, as he doubtless did, to express himself strongly respecting the honour, dignity, and privileges of saints, what more appropriate language could he employ, than that which he has selected? *Kings* merely would not mean enough. Elevation, dignity, power, splendour, and abundance, might indeed be included in this idea; but to add *priests*, in order to designate *holiness of character and*

consecration to God, seemed to be necessary here, in order fully to meet the writer's wishes, and the nature of the case. See a different but kindred method of making out a like representation, in Rom. 8: 16, 17. John 1: 12. 1 John 3: 1.

Τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ, [priests] *to God even his Father* means, that they were consecrated or devoted to him, and employed in his service; a wide distinction therefore existed between them and the so-called priests of the heathen world, and even between them and ritual Levitical priests.

Αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος, where the article stands before each noun; appropriately as it respects the Greek idiom, but it is not customary in English. The article in such a case denotes, that *the* glory and *the* praise or dominion, which are appropriate to such a Saviour as he had described, should be ascribed to him. That *αὐτῷ* refers to *ἀγαπῶντι* and *λούσαντι*, *to him who loves* and *has cleansed* sinners, is certain from the construction of the sentence; for on any other ground of construction the whole of the first part of the sentence would be without any appropriate sense, and the Dative case would stand without anything related to it, or to be attributed to the person designated by it. *Αὐτῷ* merely *resumes* the *ἀγαπῶντι* and *λούσαντι*, which had been suspended by the intermediate clause.—*Δόξα*, in classical Greek, usually means *opinion*, *sentiment*, *expectation*, *supposition*, etc.; but sometimes it is employed in the sense of *existimatio*, i. e. *estimation*, *fame*, *honour*, *reputation* or *respect*. Kindred to this last class of meanings is the word *δόξα* in New Testament doxologies. *To him be δόξα* means, to him let the church render honour or respect; for this is giving *glory* to God, as we usually express it.—*Κράτος* Ewald renders *praise*, and refers us to the Hebrew גְּבוּר וְעֹז, on which he remarks, that עֹז (*strength*) often means the *praise* which results from the exercise of strength in the way of defence, etc. So many lexicons and critics also say. But it is at least needless here. When the writer had just said of the Lord Jesus, that he is *the first born of the dead*, and *the prince of the kings of the earth*, is it not appropriate to attribute *κράτος* to him here? In the later Greek, *superior command*, *lordship*, *dominion*, *regal authority*, is often designated by *κράτος*; and why not retain its usual and appropriate meaning here?

Εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, *to ages of ages*, i. e. forever and ever, as we are wont to express the idea of a never ending period. The Greek is a mere copy of the Hebrew עוֹלְמֵי עוֹלָמִים; and this, according to Hebrew usage, is the strongest expression which the language can employ, in order to designate an *endless period* of time; for it has a superlative intensity, similar to that of *servant of servants*, i. e. most abject or degraded servant, and the like. The *classic* writers do not

employ this phraseology for such a purpose; the Greek here is Hebraistic.

Here then is a doxology or ascription of honour and dominion to the Saviour, through endless ages. And this, sanctioned by a solemn *ἀμήν*. In what light must John have viewed the Saviour, in order to make such an ascription to him? If it be said that John has so done through mistake, and because his feelings were overpowered by the splendour of the vision in which the Saviour appears; then why is he not corrected here, as he is in Rev. 19: 10. 22: 9, when about to direct his homage amiss? Instead of this, we find him, in this book, often repeating the same ascriptions of praise to the Lord Jesus as are rendered to God the Father; and this even Eichhorn and Ewald confess. Plainly nothing less than spiritual homage is paid to the Redeemer here—a homage which the writer prays may be forever continued.

(7) Behold, he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they who pierced him, and all the tribes of the land shall wail because of him; yea, amen.

Ἰδού, like the Hebrew הִנֵּה, *ecce*, calls the special attention of the reader or hearer to what is said in the sequel.—*Ἔρχεται, he is coming*, as we also say, in English, respecting an event yet future, specially when that event is nigh at hand. That such was the case in the present instance, is manifest from *ἐν τάχει*, and *καιρὸς ἐγγύς*, in vs. 1 and 3.

Μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν means, *accompanied* or *surrounded by the clouds*, for *μετά* (*with*) frequently indicates the relation of a thing in the midst of other things which accompany or surround it. The idea here is, that he will come seated on a cloud as his throne or chariot, or at least in a cloud moving or conveying these. So God is said to be surrounded, in Ps. 18: 11. The clouds are his chariot, Ps. 104: 3. Comp. also Ex. 19: 16. 40: 34. Is. 6: 4. 19: 1. Ezek. 1: 4. The object of this figurative language, is to show that Christ will come in a majestic and awful manner, as enthroned upon a cloud fraught with thunder, lightning, and tempest, and thus will execute vengeance upon his enemies. The same idea is exhibited in Matt. 24: 30, with which comp. Nah. 1: 3. The passage in Acts 1: 9 is of a different tenor.

Πᾶς ὀφθαλμός, every eye, i. e. every person, every individual; where synecdoche (a part taken for the whole) is employed. This usage is too common to need any explanation.—*Ὄψεται*, Mid. Fut., which tense is common in a great portion of the usual irregular verbs, and is thus employed in the simple *active* sense. The old root of the present verb was *ὄπτω*, which is out of use; *ὀπτάνω* is occasionally found, from which *ὄψομαι* may be formed. That the lexicons should range this word under *ὁράω*, would seem strange, were we not habituated to such incon-

gruities. The sentiment, that *every eye shall see him*, is evidently intended to be preparatory for that which is said in the sequel: *καὶ κόψονται κ. τ. λ.* If the reader will turn to the words of the Saviour in Matt. 24: 30, he will perceive that the verse before us is throughout only a repetition of what is there said, with some small variations appropriate to the time when the Apocalypse was written.

It may be proper here, in order to show how common the idea of the Son of man as *coming in the clouds of heaven* was among the Jews of early times, to note, that one appellation bestowed on him was עֲנָנִי, q. d. *cloud-comer;* and also בַּר נַבְלַי, (= *υἱὸς νεφελῆς?*) which, when applied to the Son of man, must mean his sudden and unexpected coming or descent from the clouds; comp. Matt. 16: 1. This language doubtless took its rise from Dan. 7: 13. See Bengel Archiv, VIII. p. 24; also Ewald in loc.

Καὶ οἵτινες αὐτὸν ἐξεκέντησαν, is quoted from Zech. 12: 10, as is also a part of the preceding and of the following words; which is evident from comparison: וְהִבִּיטוּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־דָּקָרוּ וְסָפְדוּ עָלָיו. By the phrase before us, those are particularized, among the mass that shall see with dread the tokens of an approaching avenger, who were specially concerned with the crucifixion of the Lord of glory. *Ἐξεκέντησαν* (from *ἐκκεντέω*) may of course signify *putting to death* or *destroying* in any manner; for it may be used generically, just as *slaying with the sword* is. But the verb is peculiarly appropriate to the designation of piercing with a spear, or with any sharp weapon, and is often used for this purpose. Those who are not inclined to admit of any specific Messianic views in the Old Testament, construe it tropically in Zech. 12: 10, and apply it only to Jehovah. But that the writer of the book before us interpreted it as a specific *Messianic* prediction, is plain enough to every unprejudiced eye. More still may be said. John is the only Evangelist who has given us an account of piercing Jesus' side with a spear, as he hung upon the cross, John 19: 34. In the context there (v. 37) he expressly refers to the passage in Zech. 12: 10 as predicting this; and there he translates דָּקָרוּ by *ἐξεκέντησαν*, just as in the present case. Yet the Septuagint version renders the passage: *ἐμβλέψονται πρός με ἀνθ' ὧν κατωρχήσαντο*, i. e. they shall look to me because they have insulted me. And although Aquila, Symm., and Theodotion, render דָּקָרוּ by *ἐξεκέντησαν*, yet their versions, as is probable, were not extant in the time of the Apocalyptist. John then must have *translated* the Hebrew original, in this case, for himself. And here it should be noted, that in both cases, viz. in the Gospel and in the Apocalypse, the version is exactly the same, as to all the important words. This looks like the same hand in both. Ewald, to avoid the force of this appeal, suggests, that formerly the Septuagint copies may have read *ἐξεκέντησαν*, which

was displaced by Origen, or some other emendator. If this be a lawful escape from the force of the appeal, then there is no case where a man can be bound by appeal to the Septuagint text; for he may always say: 'Once it contained a different reading.' This is certainly *possible;* but yet, until some evidence for a change is produced, we must abide by the text as it is. His suggestion, that two different writers might easily have hit upon the same translation of דָּקַר, certainly has more weight in it than the other appeal; and indeed the nature of the case, thus presented, shows that no more than *probability* can be urged, in favour of the position that the same hand was concerned with both passages. See Stein. in Winer's Theol. Journal, V. p. 24 seq., who has strenuously insisted on the force of this evidence, in favour of the *apostolic* origin of Apocalypse. I should say, that the circumstance of a reference to the pierced side of the Saviour, *mentioned only by John* among all the Evangelists, and again distinctly brought to view here, affords stronger ground of presumption that the same hand was employed in both the passages, than the circumstance of the sameness of translation as mentioned above.

Κόψονται, Fut. Midd. voice, appropriately here: *beat themselves*, viz. smite upon the breast, or thigh, as was customary on occasions of deep agitation and fear, and of sorrow.—*Ἐπ' αὐτόν*, *because of him, on account of him;* Rob. Lex. *ἐπί*, III. 2. c. *a.*

Πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς is language borrowed from the ancient Hebrew Scripture, where the Jews are often spoken of as the *twelve tribes*, among whom all the land of Canaan was partitioned. Of course the expression here is designed to be comprehensive, and to denote all who dwelt in the land here referred to. What land this was, seems plain from the context, where reference is made to those concerned in the crucifixion of Christ. Then again the very manner of the description, *φυλαί*, etc., shows that Palestine is here in view on the part of the writer. And so the sequel, chap. vi—xi, fully demonstrates. I would not deny that בְּשָׁפָחוֹת may be sometimes used respecting different *nations*, and so the corresponding *φυλαί*, as in the Septuagint; but here the connection demands a different understanding of it, and such an one, moreover, comports with common usage.

Ναί, ἀμήν, a double expression of *so be it, assuredly, certainly*, one in Greek and one in Hebrew. Comp. Rev. 22: 20. The like double expression has Paul in Rom. 8: 16, *ἀββᾶ, ὁ πατήρ*! Besides this, the designation of both Greek and Hebrew names is common in John's Gospel; e. g. John 1: 39, 43. 9: 7. comp. Heb. 7: 2. Two words of synonymous import are designed to strengthen the expression of an idea. John means to say, that the coming of the Lord Jesus to punish his enemies and crucifiers, is altogether certain.

(8) I am Alpha and Omega, saith the Lord God, who is, and was, and is to come, the Almighty.

What is meant by *Alpha* and *Omega* is plain from Rev. 1: 17, where it is explained by *ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος*; and again in Rev. 22: 13, where all these appellations are joined together. The reference is plain, Alpha being the first and Omega the last letter of the Greek alphabet. Among the Rabbins, the expression *from* א *to* ת is common, in order to designate the whole of anything from the beginning to the end; e. g. Jalk. Reub. fol. 17. 4, "Adam transgressed the whole law, from א to ת." Ib. 48. 4, "Abraham kept the whole law, from א to ת," etc. See other examples in Schoettgen Hor. Heb. I. p. 1086. The article here, before the names of the letters, is appropriate in Greek, although we do not employ it in English. The respective letters, as well-known and monadic, may very properly receive it.

But who is it that makes the claim involved in the application of such language to himself? *Λέγει κύριος ὁ θεός*, is the answer in most of the critical editions; and certainly the majority of witnesses testify in favour of this reading. Ewald, however, prefers the vulgate reading *κύριος*, in consequence of what is said of Christ in Rev. 1: 17. 22: 12—16. And indeed one can hardly make this comparison, without feeling a probability that *ὁ θεός* has in fact been added to the original text. But be this as it may, it is clear that the passage as it is, whichever reading may be adopted, may refer to Christ as the speaker; for it may be the same that is "coming in the clouds, etc.," who is the speaker in this present case. So Ewald, and even Heinrichs, concedes. The former says: Christum deo proximum et in Apocalypsi saepius Dei epithetis ornatum haec effari ostendant [nexus loci, etc.]; the latter: Ipse [Christus] in omni carmine divinis praedicatis insignitur. Still, the weight of external testimony is greatly in favour of *κύριος ὁ θεός*, as may be seen in Griesbach. Admitting this latter text, it is more facile to regard God as the speaker. V. 8 is then a confirmation on the part of God himself of what the Apocalyptist had just been saying, in respect to the coming of Christ and the consequent punishment of his enemies. It is as much as to say: 'I the almighty and unchangeable God will execute this commination.' The sense therefore is good and apposite, when taken in this way. Nor need the reader be jealous lest something should hereby be detracted from the honour and glory of Christ; for the very same things are, beyond all doubt, said of him in Rev. 1: 17. 22: 13. There is surely no need of forcing doubtful passages into the rank of proof-passages.

The vulgate has *ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος* after the clause "I am Alpha and Omega." But this is not sufficiently supported.

As to ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, see on v. 4. It is merely a paraphrastic explanation of the word *Jehovah*.—Ὁ παντοκράτωρ is the usual word employed by the Septuagint to render צְבָאוֹת, when constituting a part of the name of God; and so they also translate שַׁדַּי; and the Greek word is well adapted to designate the leading idea of both these Hebrew appellations. Higher titles than these cannot be bestowed on any being; and such are here bestowed on HIM WHO IS THE FIRST AND THE LAST. The clause in question seems to favour the reading κύριος ὁ θεός.

The writer having thus finished his salutation, and expressed the thoughts which naturally connected themselves with the mention of Jesus Christ as the Redeemer and Vindicator of his church, now proceeds to relate the vision, which he saw in a state of prophetic ecstasy at the isle of Patmos. In this state he was addressed by a loud voice behind him, like that of a trumpet, commanding him to *write down* what was about to be communicated to him, and address it to the seven churches of Asia that are named. Turning around in order to discover the personage by whom he was thus addressed, he saw a glorious being in the form of man, surrounded by seven splendid lights, clothed with magnificent apparel, and encircled by a radiance of his whole person which was supernatural. In his right hand were seven stars, and as it were a two-edged sword issuing from his mouth. Overpowered by the vision he fell senseless at his feet. While in that state, the right hand of the Saviour was extended to raise him up, and words of encouragement and of kindness were addressed to him. He was told what was meant by the seven stars and the seven golden lamps, and commissioned to write what was then disclosed, and what would afterwards be disclosed, and send it to the churches which had been named.

Such is the preparation for the communications which John is about to receive. What was then disclosed, and which was primarily intended for the seven churches, next follows, and is contained in Epistles addressed respectively to each of them.

(9) I John, your brother, and companion in the affliction and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle called Patmos, because of the word of God and on account of the testimony of Jesus.

That the name of the person to whom the following visions were disclosed, was *John;* and that the same individual to whom the disclosures were made wrote an account of them; is clear from this verse, compared with Rev. 1: 3, 4, and specially with 22: 8, near the close of the work. The same thing is apparent from the often repeated commands to *write down* what the author saw and heard; e. g. in 1: 11, 19. 2: 1, 8, 12, 18. 3: 1, 7, 14. 10: 4 (command to refrain from writing). 14: 13. 19: 9. 21: 5. All these commands have at least the appearance of dictating to one in the act of writing, and directing him now to insert this and now that, in order that it might not be omitted. In 10: 4, John hears the seven thunders uttering their voice, and expressing something which he immediately begins to write down, when a voice from

heaven arrests him, and commands him to abstain. In 14: 13. 19: 9, and 21: 5, sentiments of peculiar importance are specially required to be written. In regard to all of the epistles to the seven Churches, the command in each case has every appearance of an injunction to write down, upon the spot, what is dictated to John at that time and in that place. At all events, Rev. 10: 4 shows that a process of writing was in operation, during the visions themselves. Whatever may be said about the incongruities of this process during an ecstasy, or rather, a series of ecstasies; whatever of difficulty there may be in supposing John to be furnished with materials for writing in such a place as Patmos; it cannot do away, or even obscure, the plain and obvious import of these passages. How can we decide exactly what constitutes the physiological condition of a state of prophetic ecstasy, how long it may continue, or what an individual who is in it may accomplish, even during the *vision?* At all events, what difficulty is there in supposing, that John may have recorded the whole disclosures made by his visions, as they were at intervals presented in succession to his mind; just as we may suppose Isaiah, or any other prophet, to have written at intervals between visions, or even during or under prophetic inspiration or influence? A short period would suffice for the entire composition of the Apocalypse, in such a glowing state of mind. As to *materials for writing*, even if John were prohibited from carrying them with him into his exile, how easy and natural was it for his numerous friends, at Ephesus and the neighboring coast, to supply them at Patmos, which is but a few hours' sail from Ephesus! Besides, that this island was entirely destitute of inhabitants, is not certain, nor even probable. That there were at least fishermen's huts in such a place, one cannot well refrain from believing. Such is the case at present, desolate and barren as it is; such was probably the case when John wrote.

As to the argument derived from *ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι*, i. e. the Aor. *ἐγενόμην*, which, it is said, indicates a *former* period, and therefore must have been penned *after the return* of John to Ephesus, I cannot perceive that much if any weight can be justly attached to it; although Lücke (Einl. p. 143) expressly says, that it decides this point *unstreitig*, i. e. beyond controversy. What other tense than this of the verb *γίνομαι*, could John employ, in a narration such as this of *successive* phenomena like those in his vision? *Ἐγενόμην*—"*I was* in the spirit on the Lord's day," declares the occurrence of an event which *preceded* the communications that were made to him and are related in the sequel. How could he relate these things *in order*, and not speak in the Praeterite tense (as he has done) of those which first happened? Besides, the fact that he addresses an *epistle* to the church at Ephesus, favours the idea that he was *absent* from them when it was written. I do not say

that it is decisive, but that it increases the probability that the Apocalypse was composed while he was at Patmos. Last of all; there are *intervals* between the visions, noted in the book itself, during which we may very naturally suppose that to be written which had preceded; e. g. 4: 1 begins a new ecstasy, with a *μετὰ ταῦτα* in regard to the former one which concerned the seven churches. So again in 7: 1. 7: 9. 15: 5. 18: 1. 19: 1, *successive* periods are distinctly marked. With equal or with even greater distinctness does the nature of the case, in such a transition as that in 12: 1 seq., mark *succession* and *interval*. So in 20: 1 seq. 20: 11 seq. 21: 1 seq. It is indeed most natural to suppose, that visions, so overpowering as those of John must have been, would be experienced rather at intervals than continuously; and if so, what valid objection is there against the supposition, that some of the intermediate time was employed in writing down what had already been communicated?

That the *John* named in this verse was the *apostle* John, I must on the whole believe; but not merely or principally from what is here said. There is plainly nothing inconsistent with this opinion in the matter of the verse; but still, there is nothing here said, which might not have been predicated of some other individual.*

* It is not mere conjecture, for the sake of aiding my own views, when I suggest, that the bodily exhaustion which attended such visions was very great. This may be seen by comparing Ezek. 1: 28. 3: 14, 15, 23, which exhibits the state of body and mind that followed the rapture of that prophet. See the same in Dan. 8: 17, 18. 10: 9, 16, 17. These passages exhibit the manner in which a prophet may be, and usually was, affected during his ecstasy; while Dan. 7. 15, 28. 8: 27 show that severe indisposition of body and mind may be consequent upon prophetic ecstasies. In perfect accordance with these texts is Rev. 1: 17, showing that John was wholly overpowered by a vision of the Saviour. Comp. Zech. 4: 1. No other instance of any vision, or series of visions, so long as those of the Apocalypse, and all within a short period of time, can be found in the Scriptures; and the nature of the case, as well as the manner of the book itself which marks so many intervals, serves to show that a series of successive visions, connected as to their general object, were not only seen, but successively recorded, by the Apocalyptist.

Lücke, in order to avoid the force of the argument derived from the *epistles* to the churches in favour of the position that John must have been *at some foreign place*, suggests that the epistolary form arises merely from the ordinary usage of the apostles in addressing the churches, and amounts to nothing more than a kind of rhetorical fiction. I will not say that this is incongruous with the nature of the case, or very improbable in itself: for any apostle, or pastor of a church, residing with them, might address the churches, or a particular church, in this way. But nothing obliges us, in this case, to resort to such a method of explanation. Why then should we do so? John is at Patmos. There he sees a series of divine visions. He undertakes to communicate to the churches, in whose welfare he feels a peculiar interest, an account of them. He states where he was when they commenced; and relates successively the events that occurred and the disclosures which were made. What could he do, more or less, than use the Praeterite tense

Ἀδελφὸς ὑμῶν, your brother, a frequent appellation by which Christians called each other, as indicating not only a strong feeling of friendship but also a sameness of faith; so Acts 9: 30. 11: 29. 1 Cor. 5: 11. Rev. 12: 10, et al. saepe. The apostles named themselves the *brethren* of other Christians, and called others their own brethren. The same was done by private individuals, in respect to other Christians. So nothing definite as to the rank or office of John, can with any certainty be argued from the appellation which he here gives himself.

Συγκοινωνὸς . . . Ἰ. Χριστοῦ, a co-partner, a fellow-partaker in THE *affliction.* The article before *θλίψει* is not without emphasis here, inasmuch as it seems to mark a persecution or affliction then existing *on account of the Christian religion*, *τῇ θλίψει Ἰ. Χριστοῦ*. It might be construed as meaning *affliction like to that of Christ*, for so the Genitive relation of *Χριστοῦ* would permit us to explain it; but the other method of interpretation is most consonant with the tenor of the book, and clearly it is equally allowable; see N. Test. Gramm. § 99.

The article also belongs (in sense) to *βασιλείᾳ* and *ὑπομονῇ*, but it is omitted in these last cases by a very common usage; N. Test. Gramm. § 89. 9. The relation of *βασιλείᾳ* here to *Ἰ. Χριστοῦ* is, from the necessity of the case, somewhat different from that of *θλίψει*. The writer means to say, that he and those whom he addressed were fellow-partners in the kingdom of Christ, or fellow-citizens (to speak in a political

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in such a case? And how can the use of this tense prove that he had migrated to some other place, before he wrote to the churches? And why may we not suppose that he actually designed, that the seven epistles should be regarded as *realities?* In what way could he instruct the churches, or publish his book of visions, more effectually than in this?

We ought not to admit artificial explanations, when natural ones suffice. Let it be that John was an apostle, or a mere presbyter, the nature of the case (as to the *facts* before us) is not changed. The very numerous references in the book to the process of writing, and more especially 10: 4, are explained most easily and naturally in the manner which I have indicated. Nothing decisive or very satisfactory can be alleged against this explanation. The proximity of Patmos to the continent of Asia must have always enabled the friends of John to hold some communication with him during his exile. It is not only possible, then, but altogether probable, that the book was written at Patmos, as it naturally purports to be.

The critical reader, who is aware how many theories have been spun out of the words under consideration, and how much influence they have had on the higher criticism of the book, will not regard with disapprobation an attempt to elucidate this matter, although it may have occupied more time and space than he would willingly spare. Even Ewald, in his recent work on the Apocalypse, says that the use of *ἐγενόμην* (which he names the *Imperfect*, p. 96), decides that John had returned from Patmos before he wrote his book; which, he adds, also appears from the whole tenor of the book. Is not this deducing too much, and deducing it with a great deal too much confidence, from the premises in question?

way) of the new spiritual empire or kingdom of Christ; so that he and they sustained one common relation to it.

Ὑπομονῇ has been differently construed by different interpreters. It appears most naturally to designate *patient endurance* of the θλίψις already mentioned; and in its relation to Ἰ. Χριστοῦ it is in the same predicament as θλίψις, inasmuch as the sentiment is, 'patient endurance on account of Christ, or for Christ's sake.' Both the writer and the churches addressed had been persecuted in common, because of their Christianity; to one and the same kingdom did they in fact belong; patient endurance in suffering for Christ's sake, they had both exhibited. Others explain it thus: Patience like that of Christ (Heinrichs). Others still: Patient waiting (תִּקְוָה or תּוֹחֶלֶת) for Christ, or constancy in expecting his coming (Ewald). This latter sentiment would involve the idea, that those addressed by John were already possessed of such views in respect to Christ's coming as are exhibited in the Apocalypse; which, arguing from the manner of address in this book, does not seem altogether probable. I prefer the other and more simple explanation; merely adding that the Christian maxim quoted by Paul (2 Tim. 2: 12): "If we suffer we shall also reign with him," evidently conveys in substance the same sentiment as the passage before us: for, first, we have the θλίψις; then the βασιλεία; and then, very naturally, in view of such a reward which is to be consequent upon suffering, comes the ὑπομονή, *the patient endurance* of all the evils that might be inflicted.

Ἐγενόμην ἐν . . . Πάτμῳ. In relating this occurrence, as has been remarked above, a Praeterite would of course be employed; for the being there took place before what is related in the sequel happened.

Patmos is a small island some six or eight miles in length, and but little more than a mile in breadth. It is merely mentioned by the ancients; Plin. Hist. nat. 4: 23. Strabo, 10: 488. Eustath. ad Dionys. Perieg. 530. It is now called Patino or Patmosa (not Palmosa or Patmo, as Winer has it in his Bib. Lex.). It has neither trees, nor rivers, nor any land for cultivation, except some little nooks among the ledges of rocks. Here the banished, from the Roman provinces of Asia, as it would seem, were sent in ancient times; as those from the Grecian provinces in Europe were sent to Gyarus or Gyara, which is in the midst of the Cyclades and of the same character as Patmos. So Juven. Sat. X. 170, *Gyarae clausus scopulis*, (respecting an exile). Patmos has now a village of fishermen's huts; and so had Gyarus, in ancient times. No island among all the Sporades (Patmos belongs to that cluster) was so appropriate for a place of exile as this; and hither the text represents John as being sent.

Διὰ τὸν λογον . . . Ἰησοῦ. On the meaning of this remarks have already been made, under Rev. 1: 2. That διά, with the nouns which follow, here designates the *cause* or *occasion* of John's being in Patmos, seems to be certain from the use of this same formula in Rev. 6: 9. 12: 11, and specially 20: 4; cases about which there can be no well-ground-

ed doubt. The natural, not to say the necessary, meaning of διά (with the Acc.) indicates *cause* or *occasion*. Διά necessarily designates here something which *preceded*, in the order of time, the main event that was brought about, or, in other words, the cause or ground (marked by διά) of an event must precede the event itself which was the consequence. Winer even insists, that διά with the Acc., in the New Testament, always marks the *reason* or *ground* of a thing, or else the *means*, and never an *ultimate design* or *intention* to be accomplished; N. Test. Gramm. § 53. c. ed. 4. At all events, in the Apocalypse, such is the usage in every case, as it seems to me, if the present be excepted. To say then, (as some have done), that John went to Patmos in order to preach there, or in order to write the Apocalypse, is virtually renouncing the ascertained meaning of language in such cases, and cannot therefore have any good claim to credit. The Apocalypse has explained itself in regard to the manner in which this phraseology is employed and is to be interpreted; as the references above most clearly show. It was, then, because John had been a preacher of the word of God, and had proclaimed the testimony of Jesus Christ, that he was exiled to Patmos. In fact, the suggestion that John went to Patmos *in order to write the Apocalypse*, is so improbable upon the very face of it, as not to deserve any serious refutation.

Eichhorn (Einl. ins N. Test. II. p. 367), and Bleek (Schleiermach., etc., Zeitschrift. II. p. 151), have thrown out the suggestion, that John states his being at Patmos only as a *visionary matter*, i. e. he was transported there merely in prophetic ecstasy; and *there*, because it was an appropriate place for visions; and we are referred to Ezek. 3: 14, 15. 8: 3. 40: 2. Dan. 8: 2, and the like, for examples of a similar nature. But such examples these are not; for these prophets expressly state, that they were brought to this place or to that, *in vision*, or *by the power of the Spirit of God*, and therefore leave no room for misapprehension. Yet John, in the case before us, has not at all suggested the idea, that he was *in the Spirit* before he came to Patmos, but simply states that he was residing there when the Spirit came upon him. Why should we confound cases so entirely discrepant? No one can well mistake Ezekiel or Daniel; yet it would seem that the whole Christian world must have mistaken John, except Eichhorn, Bleek, and the very few who accede to their interpretation. At least, if the views of these critics are correct, such is the case. Were it a matter which concerned an obscure or difficult text of Scripture, such a mistake might have taken place. But in so plain a matter as the present apparently is, it would seem to be at least τὶ ἄτοπον. If we must suppose a *fiction* in this case, is it not strange that John did not prefer Sinai, or Carmel, or Tabor, (all *sacred* places), as the scene. The Apocalyptist, we cannot

reasonably doubt it, *means to be understood as stating a fact;* and whether it be supposed that this fact took place under Nero, or under Domitian, both of whom persecuted and banished Christians, everything wears the air of plain probability. Why should the author, who has not concealed his name, conceal the *place* where he was when his ecstasy came upon him? And why should not the statement be credited on the same ground that we credit that of Ezekiel (Ezek. 1: 2), who says that he was by the river Chebar, when the first vision of God was disclosed to him? Lücke (Einl. p. 242), and Ewald (Comm. p. 96), admit the *reality* of the writer's residence at Patmos; as do nearly all the older critics.

(10) I was in the spirit on the Lord's day; and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet.

Ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι means that John was *under spiritual influence;* and in a case like the present, that he was under the special and extraordinary influence of the Spirit; for such is the usage of the Scriptures in respect to this phraseology. The same idea is elsewhere expressed, by *being* ἐν ἐκστάσει, Acts 10: 10. 11: 5. 22: 17, i. e. transported as it were out of one's self, put into a condition different from that which belongs to the ordinary development of one's own powers and faculties. Ezekiel names this state *a seeing of the visions of God*, i. e. seeing visions disclosed by divine influence, Ezek. 1: 1. 8: 3. 40: 2. Such visions are habitually ascribed by the prophets to divine influence; Jer. 24: 1. Ezek. 11: 25. Amos 7: 1, 4, 7. 8: 1. Zech. 3: 1. Specially are such visions caused by the *Spirit of God;* or by *the hand of the Lord* (i. e. divinepower or influence), which is an equivalent expression; Ezek. 1: 3. 8: 1. 37: 1. 40: 1. In Ezek. 11: 24, the prophet speaks of being brought in vision into the land of Chaldea בְּרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים, i. e. *by the Spirit of God.* Paul, in 2 Cor. 12: 1—4, has given a vivid description of such a state of supernatural ecstasy. That John means to assert, in the case before us, that he was in a *pneumatic state*, i. e. under peculiar and extraordinary divine influence, seems at least to be philologically certain; and that the nature of the disclosures, which follow throughout the book, import the same thing, is equally plain. Our idiom obliges us to translate *in the spirit;* but the Greek employs no article and is therefore more exactly represented by the phrase *in a pneumatic state.*

Ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ, *on the Lord's day;* elsewhere called μίᾳ σαββάτων, *the first of the week*, Acts 20: 7. 1 Cor. 16: 2. These two passages show, that this first day was one of public social worship among Christians, in the apostolic age. The appellation, *Lord's day*, occurs nowhere in the New Testament, save in the passage before us. But it occurs twice in the Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians (about A. D. 101), who

calls the Lord's day, *the queen and prince of all days.* Chrysostom (on Ps. 119) says: "It was called the *Lord's day*, because the Lord arose from the dead on this day." Whether such was the case, or whether it was so named because the Lord was worshipped on that day by Christians, is of no moment as to the fact itself that such a day was set apart and specially regarded by the primitive Christians. Later fathers make a marked distinction between the *Sabbath* and *the Lord's day;* meaning by the former, the Jewish seventh-day sabbath, by the latter, the first day of the week kept as holy by Christians. So Theodoret (Fab. Haeret. II. 1), speaking of the Ebionites, says: "They keep the *Sabbath* according to the Jewish law, and sanctify the *Lord's day* in like manner as we do." A party in the Christian church adhered to this usage so long and so tenaciously, that finally the Council of Laodicea (about A. D. 350) made a decree, that 'Christians should no longer keep the seventh day by refraining from labour;' see Bingham's Ecc. Antiq. V. p. 286. Viewed in this light, it is easy to see that what Paul says (Rom. 14: 5. Gal. 4: 10. Col. 2: 16) concerning the unimportance of observing special days, i. e. new moons and sabbaths, is said of the *Jewish* days of this nature; and so the context in all these places plainly indicates, for he is discussing matters insisted on by Judaizers. No Christian, as he avers, is bound to observe the Jewish holidays; although the man who does observe them should not be dealt hardly with on this account. What he thus says, has of course no application to the proper *Lord's day.**

* As to the question, whether Christians were accustomed to observe the Lord's day with any good degree of strictness, I know of no testimony more credible, or more to the purpose, than that of Euseb. Comm. on Ps. 21: 30 (22: 29 in our English version); Ps. 45: 6 (46: 5); Ps. 58: 17 (59: 16); and above all (which is the *locus classicus*) on Ps. xci. (xcii.). Here he says: "The Word [Christ], by the new covenant, *translated and transferred the feast of the Sabbath* to the morning light, and gave us the symbol of true rest, viz. *the saving Lord's day*, the first [day] of the light, in which the Saviour . . . obtained the victory over death, etc. . . . On this day, which is the first [day] of the light and of the true Sun, we assemble, after an interval of six days, and *celebrate holy and spiritual Sabbath;* even all nations [assemble] redeemed by him throughout the world, and *do those things according to the spiritual law*, which were decreed for the priests to do on the Sabbath. . . . *All things whatever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath* [i. e. the Jewish seventh day], *these we have transferred to the* LORD'S DAY, as more appropriately belonging to it, because it has a precedence, and is first in rank, and *more honourable than the Jewish Sabbath.* . . . It is delivered to us [παραδέδοται, it is handed down by tradition], *that we should meet together on this day;* and it is ordered that we should do those things announced in this Psalm," [Ps. xcii.]. Comp. Justin Martyr, Apol. I. c. 89. Why this decisive passage, as to the usages of early Christians, should have been hitherto overlooked by commentators and theologians, (so far as I know, such has been the fact), one might find it difficult to say. It certainly testifies strongly against the usages, now unhappily so com-

It should be noticed, perhaps, that some commentators (e. g. Eichhorn) regard κυριακὴ ἡμέρα here as designating the *paschal day*, on the evening of which the early Christians were wont to assemble, and wait and worship until very late, with the hope and expectation of Christ's coming; see Jerome on Matt. xxiv. But this usage is plainly one of later origin; for no *early* writing mentions this day as having any special preëminence.

Μεγάλην, applied to *voice*, of course means *loud*.—ὡς σάλπιγγος heightens the description. It was not merely an ordinary loud human voice, but loud as that of a trumpet. It is almost needless to remark, that the *loudness* only is the point of comparison here, not the quality of the trumpet's voice, much less the inarticulate nature of it; as the sequel shows.—*Λεγούσης* in grammatical construction agrees with σάλπιγγος. Nor is the meaning difficult; for *a loud voice as of a trumpet speaking*, is a voice speaking trumpet-like. Eichhorn (as usual) has here corrected the author's Greek, and substituted *λέγουσαν*. It does not need the critic's aid. One reason why a *trumpet* is here designated as the object of comparison, is the frequent use made of this instrument on occasions of great moment; see in Ex. 19: 19. 20: 18. Ps. 47: 5. Zech. 9: 14. 1 Cor. 15: 52. 1 Thess. 4: 16.

(11) Saying: What thou seest write in a book, and send to the seven churches, to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamus, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.

Ὃ βλέπεις does not mean simply, what thou at the present moment seest; for the present tense, both participle and verb, is often employed in a *diffusive* sense (if I may so speak), and comprehends *what is to come*, as being connected with the present. So we may here translate: *Quod visurus es;* for so the sense of the passage, in connection with the sequel, clearly demands it to be understood.

Εἰς βιβλίον—we say *copied* INTO *a book*, but *written* IN *a book;* and in accordance with the latter phrase, is the usual idiom of the Greek γεγραμμένον ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ. But in John 8: 6, 8, (if the genuineness be allowed), we have two cases of ἔγραφεν εἰς; showing at least, a resemblance in minutiae between the Gospel and the Apocalypse, for the idiom is found nowhere else in the New Testament. *Inscribe in librum*, we might translate the phrase, i. e. engrave it upon a roll or parchment.

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mon on and over the continent of Europe, in respect to the observance of the *Lord's day*.

I have only to add, that such a day, commemorative of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and set apart for holy spiritual exercises, was peculiarly appropriate to the visions of God. The Saviour appears to John in his glory, as risen from the dead, (comp. Rev. 1: 5, 18). The day and the vision both proclaim the fact of his resurrection.

—After λέγουσα, at the beginning of the verse, the vulgate text inserts ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος· καὶ; which, for good reason, has been omitted in the critical editions. The weight of authority is plainly against it.

Ταῖς ἑπτὰ ἐκκλησίαις—The vulgate here omits ἑπτά; as Ewald thinks, with good reason. But he has founded his argument on the supposition, that John wrote the Apocalypse for *all* the churches in Asia. Yet, while I allow the correctness of such a supposition in a qualified sense, I still do not see why he might not dedicate the whole work to the *seven* churches, and by sending it to them, publish it in this way to the world. The *sending* it to the seven churches does not denote that the book was not a matter of general concern, but only that some things in it were specially appropriate to them; and this consists well with the admission of ἑπτά into the text. Again, the vulgate inserts ταῖς ἐν Ἀσίᾳ after ἐκκλησίαις, which is not sustained by the Codices, and is not here necessary to the sense.

EPHESUS was the capital of proconsular Asia, and was then the largest and most magnificent city in all that region. It lay upon the river Cayster, at the head of a large bay, and about half-way between Miletus on the south and Smyrna on the north. In ancient times it had an immense trade; and the splendid temple of Diana there (Acts 19: 34—36) was one of the wonders of the world. It was burnt down by Herostratus; but soon it was still more superbly rebuilt. Many Jews resided there; and there Paul laboured more than two years, Acts 18: 18 seq. 19: 10 seq. A great and flourishing church was founded there by this apostle; and with that church the apostle John, according to the voice of all antiquity, had a most intimate connection. At Ephesus, it would seem, was his *home*, after he left Palestine. There are, at the present time, but some half a dozen miserable huts on the spot of the ancient city, belonging to squalid Greek peasants; and the Turks name the place Ayasaluc. Such is the end of the most strenuous efforts of man to establish and render perpetual worldly splendour and magnificence. It is even difficult now to ascertain with certainty, where the temple of Diana stood; a building 425 feet long, 200 broad, 70 feet high, and with 127 marble pillars. The candlestick has indeed been removed out of its place (Rev. 2: 5), and all the glory of the splendid metropolis extinguished.

SMYRNA lies at the head of a bay that puts far up into the main land, and is a very ancient city, situated near the river Meles, and one of the reputed birth places of Homer, thence sometimes named Melesigenes. Its excellent harbour has rendered it, from time immemorial, one of the most commercial places in hither Asia. Its population is now variously estimated, from 120,000 to 160,000, consisting of Greeks, Turks, Ar-

menians, Jews, and Europeans. The rigid system of supervision and oppression, established by the Turks, has almost extinguished the development of any religion there except the Mohammedan. The Turkish name of the place is *Ismir*, i. e. the old name abridged.

Pergamus is in the southern part of Mysia; which also constituted a part of *Aeolis*, so named from the settlement of the Aeolian Greeks there after the fall of Troy. It was on the banks of the river Caicus, and at the time when the Apocalypse was written was the metropolis of that part of Asia which was held by the Romans. When Antiochus the Great, king of Syria, was defeated by the Romish power in Asia, Eumenes, a king of the region in and around Pergamus, (in which city he dwelt), aided them in their contest, and was rewarded by them with an enlargement of his dominions. Here Eumenes established a famous library, as a kind of rival to that of Ptolemy at Alexandria. It consisted of some 200,000 volumes. The last of the Attalian race of kings (Attalus III.), being childless, left this kingdom, by his last will, to the Romans (B. C. 133). It is an old tradition, that when Ptolemy refused Eumenes the privilege of exporting *papyrus* from Egypt for the use of his library, the latter invented *parchment* (called *περγαμηνή* from the place of its invention) as a substitute. Pompey (some sixty years B. C.) gave the whole of the library at Pergamus to Cleopatra of Egypt, and it was transported thither, and perished with the library at Alexandria, by order of the Mohammedan Caliph. The kingdom of which Pergamus was the capital, lasted about 152 years. This city is still a considerable one, inhabited principally by Turks, but containing also about 3000 nominal Christians. Its present name is *Pergamo*.

Thyatira lies near the borders of Lydia and Mysia, but more usually it is reckoned to the former. It is about a day's journey south of Pergamus, and about the same distance east of Elaea on the sea-coast. It is now called *Akhisar* (White Castle), and contains a population of nearly 30,000, of whom 3000 are said to be nominal Christians. In the Apocalypse the name is neuter plural (*θυάτειρα*), and so in many Greek writers; but the Latins and some of the Greeks employed the feminine singular to designate it. That it was a considerable place in the time of John, there can be no room to doubt.

Sardis (plur. *Σάρδεις*, sometimes *Σάρδις* in Greek authors), now *Sart*, was the capital of Lydia, and stood at the foot of mount Tmolus, on the banks of the river Pactolus famous for it golden sands. Here the celebrated Croesus lived and reigned, who was proverbially so rich, and who was captured by Cyrus A. C. 548. It was a very large and rich city under the Romans. In the reign of Tiberius, however, it suffered greatly by an earthquake; but it appears to have been speedily rebuilt. Tiberius himself contributed liberally for this purpose. It is now a

scene of ruins, there being only a few mud huts there, inhabited by Turks and Greeks.*

PHILADELPHIA is south-east of Sardis in Lydia, and on the small river Cogamus. Once it was a large and powerful city. At the time when the Ottomans overran all the region around, this city held out for more than eighty years against them. Finally Bajazet obliged it to yield. It is still a considerable place; and there are more than twenty churches here, although not Christians enough now to fill more than two or three of them. A recent traveller (Emerson ut supra) gives a glowing account of the scenery in and around the city. It is at present called *Allah Shehr.*

LAODICEA, in the south-west part of Phrygia, at a small distance from Colossae and Hierapolis, is situated near the junction of the two small rivers Asopus and Caprus (which soon fall into the Lycus), on a plain washed at its edges by each. The ruins now extant of many

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* A recent traveller, who lodged there for a night, has given a description of the scene by moonlight at a midnight hour, which I cannot forbear to transcribe. "Every object was as distinct as in a northern twilight; the snowy summit of the mountain [Tmolus], the long sweep of the valley, and the flashing current of the river [Pactolus]. I strolled along towards the banks of the Pactolus, and seated myself by the side of the half exhausted stream.

"There are few individuals, who cannot trace on the map of their memory some moments of overpowering emotion, and some scene, which, once dwelt upon, has become its own painter, and left behind it a memorial that time could not efface. I can readily sympathize with the feelings of him who wept at the base of the pyramids; nor were my own less powerful, on that night, when I sat beneath the sky of Asia to gaze upon *the ruins of Sardis*, from the banks of the golden sanded Pactolus. Beside me were the cliffs of the Acropolis, which, centuries before, the hardy Median scaled, while leading on the conquering Persians, whose tents had covered the very spot on which I was reclining. Before me were the vestiges of what had been the palace of the gorgeous Croesus; within its walls were once congregated the wisest of mankind, Thales, Cleobulus, and Solon. It was here that the wretched father mourned alone the mangled corse of his beloved Atys; it was here that the same humiliated monarch wept at the feet of the Persian boy, who wrung from him his kingdom. Far in the distance were the gigantic *tumuli* of the Lydian monarchs, Candaules, Halyattys, and Gyges; and around them were spread those very plains, once trodden by the countless hosts of Xerxes when hurrying on to find a sepulchre at Marathon.

"There were more varied and more vivid remembrances associated with the sight of Sardis, than could possibly be attached to any other spot of earth; but all were mingled with a feeling of disgust at the littleness of human glory; all—all had passed away! There were before me the fanes of a dead religion, the tombs of forgotten monarchs, and the palm-tree that waved in the banquet-hall of kings; while the feeling of desolation was doubly heightened by the calm sweet sky above me, which, in its unfading brightness, shone as purely now as when it beamed upon the golden dreams of Croesus."—Emerson's *Letters from the Aegean*, p. 113 seq.

theatres, temples, etc., show that it was once a large city. The whole rising ground on which the city stood, is one vast tumulus of ruins, abandoned entirely to the owl and the fox. This city was so situated, as to become the battle-ground of contending parties in Asia Minor, first under the Romans, and then under the Turks. It has doubtless suffered also from earthquakes. For centuries, we know not how many, it has been a perfect mass of ruins. In its neighbourhood is a village named *Eski-hissar*, which has been built up from its ruins, and contains some fifty or sixty people, among whom, (on the visit of a recent traveller there), there were but two nominal Christians. "The name of Christianity," says Emerson (ut sup. p. 101), "is forgotten, and the only sounds that disturb the silence of its desertion, are the tones of the Muezzin, whose voice from the distant village [Eski-hissar] proclaims the ascendancy of Mohammed. Laodicea is even more solitary than Ephesus; for the latter has the prospect of the rolling sea, or of a whitening sail, to enliven its decay; while the former sits in widowed loneliness, its walls are grass-grown, its temples desolate, its very name has perished." A thunder storm gathered on the mountains at a distance, while this traveller was examining the ruins of Laodicea. He retreated to Eski-hissar and waited until the fury of the storm was abated, but set off on his journey again before it had entirely ceased to blow and to rain. "We preferred," says he (p. 102), "hastening on, to a farther delay in that melancholy spot, where everything whispered desolation, and where the very wind that swept impetuously through the valley, sounded like the fiendish laugh of time exulting over the destruction of man and his proudest monuments."

Such has been and are the situation and circumstances of the seven churches of Asia, who are addressed by the Apocalyptist. I have already remarked, that John was probably acquainted with other churches in this region besides those named. The particular reason why he addresses but seven churches, and no more, I have also endeavoured to give in another place; Vol. I. § 13. p. 219 seq. The exegetical problems which have been raised in regard to this matter of *seven*, by Vitringa and others, are also examined in the same section to which the reader has just been referred.

(12) And I turned to see the voice which spake with me; and when I had turned, I beheld seven golden lamps;

Βλέπειν means primarily *to see with one's eyes* objects visible to the sense of sight. But it is also employed to denote the perception or notice of the *mind;* and then it means, as here, *to discern, to descry, to perceive, to observe.* So in Matt. 15: 31. John 5: 19. 2 Cor. 12: 6. Rom. 7: 23. Heb. 10: 25 al.

Ἐλάλει μετ' ἐμοῦ, so, with the Genitive, when a writer means to represent an address as it were dialogistically, *colloquens;* but with the Dative following, when an address is made in the way of discourse addressed to an assembly; yet sometimes with *πρός* and the Accusative, in this latter way.

Ἑπτὰ λυχνίας, *seven lamps*, i. e. seven splendid radiant lights. In v. 20 these are said to be symbols of the seven (Asiatic) churches. The imagery is neither novel nor strange. In Dan. 8: 10, the Jewish worshippers are named *the host of heaven*, and Antiochus is represented as casting down this host, and also *some of the stars*, i. e. some who were conspicuous among this host, viz. the priests officiating in the temple. So in Rev. 1: 20, the stars in the hand of the Saviour are said to be the *ἄγγελοι* of the churches. In our text, the imagery of *lamps* is specifically different from that in Daniel, but generically it is the same, viz. that of a brightly shining light. Paul, speaking of the Philippian Christians, says: *Among whom* [the wicked], i. e. surrounded by whom, *ye shine as φωστῆρες in the world*, Phil. 2: 15. Jesus says of himself: "I am the *light* of the world," John 8: 12; and he says of his disciples: "Ye are the *light* of the world," Matt. 5: 14. In Rev. 2: 28 the Saviour says respecting him who is victorious in the Christian contest: "I will give him the morning star," i. e. I will make him all bright and glorious, like the morning star. Such is the imagery common in the Old Testament and in the New; so that the sources of it in the verse before us are obvious. But the writer doubtless had in his mind the passage in Zech. 4: 2, where the prophet sees a candelabra of gold, with seven lamps thereon; which plainly indicate, as there represented, that the light of the temple, i. e. its ritual and services, shall be complete, and not remain in the unfinished and imperfect state in which it then was. Here the *application* is different; but the *costume* resembles that of Zechariah.

(13) And in the midst of the seven lamps, one like to a son of man, clothed with a long robe, and girt about the breast with a golden girdle.

Ἐν μέσῳ [*τόπῳ*] indicates that he was in a position, where he was surrounded by the seven lights.—*Ὅμοιον υἱῷ ἀνθρώπου, one like to a son of man*, i. e. one having a human form, like that of man. It would be incongruous to say: One like to *the* Son of Man; for, inasmuch as he who now makes his appearance is himself the Son of Man, i. e. the Messiah, so it would be merely saying that he was like himself. This is, to say the least, a very improbable affirmation for such a writer as John, and in such a connection as the present. Ewald, however, renders the phrase: *Similis aliquis homini;* and he understands by it the Son of Man as designated in Daniel 7: 13. But how the article could

be omitted in such a case of well known and specific reference as this (so understood) would be, it is difficult to explain. There can be no good ground to doubt, that the appellation *Son of Man*, so often applied by the Saviour to himself, (never applied to him but *once* by any of his disciples, Acts 7: 56), was grounded upon Dan. 7: 13, where it is plainly given to the expected Messiah, and has reference to the *human nature* which he would assume; comp. John 1: 14. Rom. 9: 5. 1: 3. 1 Tim. 3: 16. The Saviour appears to have habitually employed this designation of himself in the way of humility, (*ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτόν*, Phil. 2: 8); and his disciples appear to have refrained from employing it through fear of degrading him by it, inasmuch as בֶּן אָדָם and the Chaldee בַּר נָשָׁא were usually mere designations of common men as descendants of other men. In the case before us, I cannot well doubt that the meaning is conformed to the Hebrew idiom, which, specially the later Hebrew idiom, employs *son of man* so often as a simple designation of man, or at least in the way of compellation addressed to him as such; e. g. Ezek. 2: 1, 3, 6, 8. 3: 1, 3, 4, 10, 17, 25. 4: 1 al. saepe. So Beza, Vitringa, and many others. The majesty and sublimity of the personage who makes his appearance in the present case, are described in the sequel, and nothing more is here designated by *ὅμοιον υἱῷ ἀνθρώπῳ*, than that *the form was human*. I may remark, in addition to what has been said, that the Jewish people were prone to call the Messiah by the name *Son of God*, rather than to name him Son of Man; see and comp. Luke 22: 69, 70. John 1: 49—51. 12: 34. Matt. 16: 13, 16. The book of Enoch, however, shows that some of the Jews, or rather, some of the Jewish Christians of that period not unfrequently gave the appellation *Son of Man* to the Messiah; e. g. chap. 46: 1—3. 48: 2. 61: 10, 13, 17. 62: 15. 68: 38—41. 69: 1. *Son of God* it also virtually calls him, 102: 4 (No. 2). Also once, *Son of woman*, 61: 9.

Ποδήρη is an adjective from *ποδήρης*, and is a brachylogical expression for *ποδήρη χιτῶνα*. It means a garment or robe *which reaches down to the feet*, i. e. a long, full, flowing robe, (the כְּתֹנֶת of the Hebrews, 1 Sam. 15: 27, and so in Sirach 27: 8. 45: 8), which was worn by kings and nobles and priests; comp. Is. 6: 1. Enoch 14: 22. The Accusative case after *ἐνδεδυμένον* and *περιεζωσμένον* is easily explained, as the verbs in the active voice have the sense of *putting on, girding on*, and of course may govern two Accusatives, viz. one of the person and one of the thing; while the *passive* voice, (here pass. part.), retains the latter Accusative; N. Test. Gramm. § 105. 1.—*Περιεζωσμένον*, from *περιζώννυμι*, (old root *ζώω* or *ζώνω*). The *ποδήρη*, being a loose flowing robe, required a girdle to confine it about the person. See Dan. 10: 5 as the prototype.

(14) And his head and his hair were white as white wool, as snow; and his eyes like a flame of fire.

In Dan. 7: 9, the Ancient of days is represented as clothed in a garment *white as snow*, and *the hair of his head is like pure wool.* In Dan. 10: 6, the angel who makes his appearance is represented as having "a face like the appearance of lightning." In the Apocalypse λευκός is, for the most part, predicated of garments; e. g. 3: 4, 5, 18. 6: 11. 7: 9, 13. 19: 14, in which case it means a *glistening white.* Once it is predicated of a gem or precious stone (2: 17), and once of a cloud (14: 14); in which cases there can be scarcely a doubt that it means *radiant, splendid,* quasi *silvery,* i. e. of a pure splendour approaching to white, like silver, or rather like that of iron or other metals heated to what is named a *white heat.* So in Matt. 17: 2, the raiment of Jesus, during his transfiguration, is said to be λευκὰ ὡς τὸ φῶς, i. e. all luminous and exceedingly bright. In Luke 9: 29 his garment, on that occasion, is said to be λευκὸς ἐξαστράπτων, *radiantly white.* From a comparison of these various passages it seems to be clear, that in the clause before us λευκαί designates *pure white splendour.* Ensis *candens,* says Virgil (Aen. XII. 91) of a glittering polished sword; and Pliny (Hist. Nat. II. 25) speaks of a comet *argenteo crine.* Storr (Diss. on Apoc. p. 4) thinks that *gray* hairs, as the insignia of a venerable old man, are here intended; which imagery, if at all employed, would seem to be more appropriate to the Ancient of days in Dan. 7: 9, than to him who had recently risen from the dead, clothed with immortal youth and vigour. Besides, what would ἡ κεφαλή mean, in this case, since this, as well as αἱ τρίχες, is said to be λευκή? In a word, there can be no doubt that the *purest splendour,* like that of the lightning (so it is expressly described in Dan. 10: 6), or like that of metals heated to the highest point, is intended by the writer. *White hair,* considered in any other light, would be wholly inappropriate here. The comparison with *wool and snow,* two of the whitest natural objects, is not unfrequent in the Scriptures; comp. Is. 1: 18. We meet with the same imagery in the Book of Enoch, 46: 1. 14: 22, coupled with the expression "*brighter than the sun.*" In a somewhat different sense in 105: 2, 10, although perhaps even here it means *resplendent,* comp. 105: 4. Hesychius: λευκόν, λαμπρόν.

Οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ . . . πυρός, an image common elsewhere; Dan. 10: 6, *eyes as lamps of fire;* Enoch 105: 2, 4. Il. XIII. 474, et saepe. Poetry is full of the like expressions, e. g. *fiery look, lightning glance,* etc. To no member of the body is this imagery so appropriate, as to the eye.

(15) And his feet were like polished brass, glowing as in the furnace; and his voice like a voice of many waters.

Χαλκολιβάνῳ—There can be no doubt here, that the writer means to employ the same imagery which is employed by Ezekiel respecting the theophanies, where the prophet represents the splendour as like to חַשְׁמַל, 1: 4, 27. 8: 2. Probably this word is compounded of נְחֹשֶׁת *brass*, and מַל smooth or *polished*; for נְחֹשֶׁת קָלָל, *polished brass* (Ezek. 1: 7), seems to be its equivalent or synonyme. Like to this would be *χαλκολίβανον*, from *χαλκὸς λιπαρός*, *polished brass*. The exchange of *β* and *π*, also of *ρ* and *r*, is too well known in Greek to need any special explanation. Dan. 10: 6 also exhibits נְחֹשֶׁת קָלָל, in the same connection as the above passages. This *polished brass*, so called, was doubtless of a peculiar kind, and very splendid.—Other derivations the reader may find, in abundance. Eichhorn: "From the Greek *χαλκός*, *brass*, and the Hebrew לָבָן *white* . . . ut *insolentius quid* [auctor] proderet;" and surely the author accomplished his object, if he did compound the word in this way. Others: *χαλκὸς λιβανός*, i. e. *aes Libaniticum* or Lebanon-brass. Sept. (in Ezech.) *ἤλεκτρον*, Vulg. *aurichalchum*, i. e. a mixture of gold and brass. Much is said by the ancients of the splendour of this *electrum*; some making it to consist of a mixture of gold and brass, others of silver and gold, etc. See Wetstein in loc., who produces many passages, of various tenor, from both Greek and Latin writers. Comp. also Ges. Heb. Lex. voc. חַשְׁמַל. Salmasius (Exercitt. in Sol. p. 810) produces an example of the word *χαλκολίβανον* from an old Greek author, in which it means a species of *frankincense*, of a fiery resplendent colour; and this interpretation Ewald prefers. But the evident reference of our author to Ezekiel and Daniel, in his description, shows that the חַשְׁמַל of these writers is meant; and therefore, that *polished brass* is the most probable meaning. Still, the derivation of the Hebrew word, by some of the older critics, from נְחֹשֶׁת *brass* and מַלְאָ *gold*, is not an impossible nor even an improbable one; and then the word would mean *ἤλεκτρον*, *electrum* or *aurochalcum*; which would give a good sense. To my own mind, נְחֹשֶׁת קָלָל, in Ezek. 1: 7 and Dan. 10: 6, speaks decisively in favour of the first interpretation.

Πεπυρωμένοι—Several versions appear to have read *πεπυρωμένῳ*; and so also some two or three manuscripts. Eichhorn patronizes this as the preferable reading, making it agree with *χαλκολιβάνῳ*; "non enim," says he, "pedes erant in fornace igniti, sed aes." Lachmann, on the authority of Codd. A. C., reads *πεπυρωμένης*; with what sense, I am not aware. The weight of authority, as well as the sense, speaks in favour of *πεπυρωμένοι*, *glowing*. Having compared the feet to a splendid metal, the writer pursues and heightens the comparison by

supposing that they resemble the metal when subjected to a vehement heat, in which case its radiance is greatly increased.

Καὶ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ . . . πολλῶν. This simile is common in the Old Testament; e. g. Ezek. 1: 24. 43: 2. So in Rev. 14: 2. 19: 6. Also in 4 Ezra 6: 17. Comp. Dan. 10: 6. The roaring of the ocean, i. e. of the waves of the sea, is meant by *the voice of many waters;* and a more truly sublime comparison could not be made, by adverting to anything else in the whole compass of natural objects.

(16) And he held in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword; and his aspect was like the sun shining in his strength.

Ἔχων is brachylogy for *ἔχων ἦν*, and is an idiom very common in this book, in which the author imitates the later Hebrew of Daniel, which is filled with participles used in the room of verbs; an idiom, moreover, which is somewhat common everywhere in the Hebrew, although peculiarly prevalent in the book of Daniel. This book is specially a prototype of the Apocalypse. See Vol. I. § 15, p. 243 seq.

Ἀστέρας ἑπτά. The question, how these are to be disposed of by our minds in a *congruous* manner, is attended with some difficulty. The hand of an apparently human form, (*ὅμοιον υἱῷ ἀνθρώπου*), seems hardly appropriate to hold *seven stars.* Eichhorn represents the expression as meaning, that on the hand or fingers was a ring, or rings, in which were set seven diamonds or precious stones glittering like stars. So Heinrichs. But Ewald justly rejects this interpretation. Wolfius, Vitringa, and many others, are silent on the subject. There are two ways, however, in which it may be interpreted. (1) *Ἐν* means not only *in* but also *at, by, near, with,* see Rob. Lex. *ἐν*, 1. c.; so that to suppose the seven stars were *near* to his right hand, i. e. within his grasp, is one mode of solution which the diction admits of. (2) Another is, that the right hand was displayed open, and the seven small stars rested *on* it; *ἐν* often means *on* or *upon* in the like cases; Lex. ut sup. 1. b. On the supposition (altogether consonant with Scripture and the popular views), that the form apparent in this case was larger than that of usual life, in order that it might be specially imposing, there can be no particular difficulty in the position, that the stars were seen as *resting upon* the hand. Small stars indeed they must be; and so they might be, inasmuch as they represented only individual *ἄγγελοι* of the seven churches, v. 20. The idea conveyed by this symbol is, that those who were represented by the stars, *were altogether at the disposal of him in whose hand they were held.* As to the nature of the imagery, see on *λυχνίας* under v. 12.

Ῥομφαία . . . ἐκπορευομένη — The participle here is used for the

Imperfect of the verb; see on ἔχων above. The nature of the imagery, however, presents some difficulties. Are we to suppose, (as some pictures represent the case), that to the mind of John the Saviour appeared with a sword (in re verâ) issuing from his mouth? This would at least make a representation very unusual, and (may we not add?) somewhat unnatural. In order to avoid this, it has been usual to refer to the *power of the divine word* to destroy the wicked, or to accomplish anything that is requisite to be done. This word is sometimes called the *breath* of Jehovah's mouth, and represented as omnipotent, either to create or destroy; so in Is. 11: 4. 2 Thess. 2: 8. Ps. 33: 6. Perhaps Job 26: 13. Hosea 6: 5, "slain them by the words of my mouth, . . . hewed them by the prophets," i. e. by their denunciations. See also Wisdom of Solomon 11: 20. In 4 Ezra, (a book of the primitive age), the imagery of this nature approaches so near to what may be regarded as the view of John in the present case, that it is worth recital. Chap. xiii. 4, speaking probably of the Messiah as coming "cum millibus coeli," he says of him: "Exibat vox de ore ejus, ardescebant omnes." Again (v. 10): "Emisit de ore suo sicut flatum ignis, et de labiis ejus spiritus flammae . . . et succendit omnes." In v. 38 he says, that the Messiah will destroy his enemies "per legem, quae igni assimilata est," i. e. by the denunciations of the divine law. The foundation being thus laid by representing the divine word or communication as endowed with an irresistible power of excision, it was easy to take another step, and call this word a *sword*, which is the usual emblem of a destroying power. So in Heb. 4: 12. Wisd. 18: 15, 16, *ὁ παντοδύναμός σου λόγος . . . ξίφος ὀξὺ τὴν ἀνυπόκριτον ἐπιταγήν σου φέρων, καὶ στὰς ἐπλήρωσε τὰ πάντα θανάτου*; a very vivid representation. So in Enoch 61: 4, comp. with 61: 15. And in conformity with this, the Rabbins are wont to speak; see quotations to this purpose in Wetstein on 2 Thess. 2: 8, and in Schoettg. Hor. Heb. on the same passage. In conformity with this idiom, the tongue or language of men is often represented as a sharp destroying sword; Ps. 57: 4. 59: 7. Job 5: 15. In Prov. 14: 3 it is called *a rod;* in Jer. 9: 8 it is represented as an *arrow*. If now the writer had said, that the word or tongue, i. e. language, of the Saviour was like a *sharp two-edged sword*, there would have been no difficulty; the idiom on all sides supports and illustrates this. But he seems plainly to present an object visible to the eye of his mind, which object is the *symbol* of a destroying power. And as to this, Eichhorn says: "Si quid judico, forma alioquin augusta deturpatur." Heinrichs makes it merely a figurative expression, and not descriptive of an apparent symbol; and so does Ewald, although he adds much good illustration. But as all else here is *symbol*, so must this also be, in order to be congruous. We have then simply to suppose (as in 4 Ez. 13: 4,

10), that the breath which issues from the mouth of the heavenly personage assumes, in the view of the Apocalyptist, the form of a sharp two-edged sword; and we may compare this phenomenon, in some respects, with the *cloven tongues of fire* in Acts 2: 3. In this latter case, indeed, the object in view is different, inasmuch as the symbol is indicative of ability to speak in many languages. But there is no incongruity (as Eichhorn avers) in the present case, when we suppose the breath to assume an *ensiform* shape or development, not as remaining in the mouth, but after it has issued from the mouth. This would be a most terrific symbol of the power of destruction. No painter, indeed, even of the most glowing fancy, could do anything more than caricature such a tremendous image; and because he could not, the representation is declared by some to be incongruous. But could a painter draw on canvas the scene in Ps. 18: 7—16? Not even a distant actual resemblance of it. And yet this Psalm will not be charged, I trust, with *incongruities*. Neither should John be so charged, in the present case.

Καὶ ἡ ὄψις . . . δυνάμει αὐτοῦ. The question here is: What verb must be supplied after *ἡ ὄψις*? Usually *ἦν* is supposed to be the complement necessary to the sense. But if *ἦν* were to be inserted, the verb *φαίνει* in the next clause must naturally be changed to a Participle, viz. *φαίνων*, as is evident from the nature of the sentence. We must therefore supply *ἐφάνη*, or (in conformity with the preceding constructions) *φαίνουσα*, i. e. *φαίνουσα ἦν*, and so literally translate: *And his countenance* [*shone*], *as the sun shineth in his strength.* The present brachylogy saves the repetition of the verb *φαίνω*: and this, not at the expense of perspicuity, for the sense is quite plain.—The sun *ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ*, is the sun at mid-day, when his beams are most powerful; see Judg. 5: 31, for the source of the image. Meaning: 'His aspect was resplendent, like the mid-day sun.'

(17) And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead; and he laid his right hand upon me, saying: Be not afraid; I am the first, and the last, even he who liveth.

Ἔπεσα, Aor. 1 from the old root *πετω* = *πίπτω* which is a syncopate of *πίπετω*; see Gramm. § 83. 1.—*Ὡς νεκρός*—Such was the usual effect of a theophany on those who were the subjects of ecstatic vision; comp. Ex. 33: 20. Is. 6: 5. Ezek. 1: 28. 43: 3. Dan. 8: 17, 18, 27. 10: 7—9, 17. Enoch 58: 1—3. 70: 3, 4. 4 Ez. 10: 30. 12: 5, 6.—*Ἔθηκε τὴν δεξίαν κ. τ. λ.*, and the like is said in most of the cases to which reference is here made. The *right hand* is stretched out, in order to raise up him who is fallen.

The reason why he should not fear is now suggested. His helper is *ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος*. These are certain predicates of the eternal

God; see Is. 41: 4. 43: 10. 44: 6. 48: 12. To these the writer adds καὶ ὁ ζῶν = אֵל חַי, Josh. 3: 10, i. e. *the living God.* The distinction of verses, as made in our vulgate editions, interrupts and mars the sense here; for ὁ ζῶν is evidently connected closely with ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος. The sequel stands distinctly by itself. *The living One,* or *the living God,* was an epithet among the Hebrews, which distinguished the true God from all false ones, and represented him as ever energetic and potent to do whatever might be pleasing in his sight. So Ewald; although Eichhorn and Heinrichs place a colon after ἐγώ εἰμι, and make it to mean: "I am he who was formerly your beloved Master, etc.;" evidently in order to avoid the ascription to Christ of the attributes which follow. But in vain; for Rev. 22: 13 makes the same claim in behalf of the Redeemer, the force of which cannot be fairly avoided. Meaning: 'I am the eternal and unchangeable Being, who always lives; and therefore I am able to perform all that I promise, either in respect to the rewarding of my friends, or the punishing of mine enemies.'

(18) I was dead indeed, yet behold! I live forever and ever, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

Ἐγενόμην . . . τῶν αἰώνων, i. e. I was indeed subject to the power of death, yet only for a little time, for *behold! I live forever and ever,* I have risen to a life which can never be interrupted, never cease.

Ἔχω τὰς κλεῖς . . . ᾅδου—*mine are the keys of Death and Hades;* i. e. mine is the power to open the gates of the under-world or region of the dead, and to rescue whenever I please, from the power of Death and Hades. I regard θάνατος and ᾅδης here as *personifications* of the world of the dead, i. e. Death is the *king,* and Hades his subjects, or (so to speak) his executive *ministers.* So Rev. 6: 8. 20: 13, 14 would seem to compel us to interpret the passage; for there personification is altogether evident and necessary. As to *keys* and the associated idea of *unlocking,* one need but compare Ps. 9: 13. Is. 38: 10. Matt. 16: 18, in order to see that the Hebrews ascribed to the under-world or region of the dead, *doors* or *gates*—imagery borrowed from the doors of sepulchres. In like manner the great Abyss has doors to be unlocked; Rev. 9: 1. 20: 1—3. The Rabbins say, that God has reserved four keys to himself, which he has not committed to any of the angels, viz., the key of rain, of aliment, of the sepulchre, and of parturiency. Wetstein (in loc.) has many citations which show how common this sentiment was among them. If it were prevalent when the Apocalypse was written, and John had any respect to it in the passage before us, it would furnish another particular in which he ascribes to the Saviour the prerogatives of the Godhead. In the case before us, the speaker means to refer to his own resurrection, as a proof of the fact asserted in regard to his power over the world of

the dead; and he who has such power, can send his enemies to Hades, or recall his friends from there, at his pleasure. Therefore: *Μὴ φοβοῦ.*

(19) Write now what things thou hast seen, and what they signify, and also those things which will take place hereafter:

Οὖν, continuative or transitive particle here; which seems to be its primary and original design = *now then, hereupon*, i. e. in addition to what has already been said; see Rob. Lex.—*Ἃ εἶδες* refers to the vision of the Saviour, related in vs. 10—18.—*Καὶ ἃ εἰσί, and what they signify.* In regard to such a meaning of *εἰσί*, times almost without number in the Scriptures, there can be no doubt; see Matt. 13: 37—39 where this verb occurs seven times with such a meaning. See also Rev. 1: 20, and comp. Rev. 17: 9, 15, 18. Gen. 41: 26, 27. Ezek. 37: 11, et passim. The sequel in v. 20, *τὸ μυστήριον κ. τ. λ.*, appears to be in apposition with *ἃ εἰσί* here, and exegetical of it; so that special regard seems to be had, in the phrase *ἃ εἰσί*, to the symbols of the seven golden lamps and the seven stars. V. 20 explains these symbols.—The matter being thus understood, it appears that what John is commanded to write, has respect not only to the seven churches of Asia, but also to *future* events; so that *ἃ εἶδες* respects the first, and *ἃ μέλλει γίνεσθαι* the last, i. e. the latter clause looks forward to the rest of the book. Construed in the other way, viz., "Write what thou hast seen, and what things are, and what is to take place," makes the second clause unmeaning; for the *ἃ εἰσί*, in this sense, differ not from the *ἃ εἶδες*. In the interpretation which I have given, Vitringa, Eich., Heinrichs, and Ewald, all unite. V. 20 seems to render this interpretation quite necessary.

(20) The mystery of the seven stars which thou hast seen upon my right hand and the seven golden lamps. The seven stars are angels of the seven churches; and the seven lamps are seven churches.

The first part of this verse, (as I have already intimated), appears to be in apposition with *ἃ εἶδες* and epexegetical of it. If any one prefers it, he may repeat *γράψον* (mentally) before it; which will give it the same meaning as apposition; or he may regard it as the Acc. absolute; see like examples in N. Test. Gramm. § 115. 4.

Μυστήριον means something *secret, unknown, hidden*, or *obscure* to common minds; see Matt. 13: 11. Mark 4: 11. Luke 8: 10. 1 Cor. 14: 2. Eph. 5: 32. Rev. 10: 7. 17: 5, 7. There is evident reference here, in the word *μυστήριον*, to the symbols of the lamps and of the stars, which, in themselves and without any explanation, would be of uncertain signification, i. e. the meaning of them would be beyond the reach of the ordinary powers of the human mind. But this apparent *mystery* is disclosed in the sequel.

Ὧν εἶδες. Knapp retains ὧν; and with him agree Matthaei, Vater, Wetstein, Titmann, Griesbach, Hahn, and the Vulgate text. Clearly the evidence preponderates very much in favour of this; for only four or five Mss. have οὕς, and Lachmann alone has adopted it. Lücke, and probably Ewald, consent to Lachmann, because they assume the position, that the Apocalypse in no case exhibits an example of the *attraction* of the pronoun. But see the like attraction in 18: 6, about the genuineness of which there is no controversy.

Ἐπὶ τῆς δεξιᾶς μου. If we compare the ἐπί here with the ἐν before the same expression in v. 16, the inference would rather seem to be that they are equivalent to each other. Such is the fact as to the *substance* of the meaning. But the shades of expression differ; ἐν means *in, within*, designating the palm or inside of the hand; while ἐπί means *on* or *upon*, i. e. upon the palm of the hand, for any other position would be unnatural.

Οἱ ἑπτὰ ἀστέρες . . . εἰσι· I have translated ἄγγελοι here, and ἐκκλησίαι in the next clause, *without the article;* as they are in the original. As *predicates* they are more naturally anarthrous; while the adjuncts here still render them definite, and the article is not needed. We might insert the article, however, in the English version, and still render the text *ad sensum.*

The seven angels here mentioned, have given occasion to much speculation and diversity of opinion. Are they *teachers, bishops, overseers?* or is some other office designated by the word ἄγγελος here?

(*a*) Old Testament usage, viz. the *later* Hebrew, employs the word מַלְאָךְ (= ἄγγελος) to designate a *prophet*, Hag. 1: 13; also a *priest*, Mal. 2: 7, and probably Ecc. 5: 6. As *priests*, in the appropriate sense of this word, did not exist in the Christian churches, (for these had no Mosaic ritual of sacrifices and oblations), so we must compare ἄγγελος here with מַלְאָךְ (prophet) in Hag. 1: 13. Προφῆται there were in the *Christian* church; see 1 Cor. 12: 28. Acts 13: 1. 1 Cor. 14: 29, 32, 37. Eph. 2: 20. 3: 5. 4: 11. Taken in this sense, the word designates here the *leading teacher* or *religious instructor* in the Asiatic churches. The nature of the case would seem to indicate a *leader* here; else why should he be specially addressed as the representative of the whole body, in each of the churches? But,

(*b*) Another exposition has been given. Vitringa (De Vet. Synag. pp. 910 seq.) has compared the ἄγγελος of the Apocalypse with the שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר of the Jewish synagogues, which means *legatus* or *delegatus ecclesiae*, and compares well with ἄγγελος ἐκκλησίας as to the form of the phrase. The office of the individual thus named was, to superintend and conduct the worship of the synagogue; i. e. he recited prayers and read the Scriptures, or invited others to perform these duties; he called

on the priests to pronounce the final benediction, in case he himself was not a priest; he proclaimed the sacred feasts; and, in a word, he *superintended* the whole concerns of religious worship, and ordinarily took the lead in them himself. He was a *προεστώς*, or an *ἐπίσκοπος*, and also a *διδάσκαλος* in a greater or less degree; comp. John 3: 10, *ὁ διδάσκαλος*. The best account of this office is in Schoettgen, Horae Heb. pp. 1089 seq., who has pointed out some errors and deficiencies of Vitringa. See also Buxtorf, Lex. Chald. under the two Hebrew words above named respectively, pp. 1885, 2411. But he is too brief to give much satisfaction.—From the views contained in these writers, Ewald has made out the office of *ἄγγελος* (שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר) to be a kind of *clerk*, *secretary*, and *sexton* to the churches, and concludes that *διάκονος* is much better fitted to express the meaning of *ἄγγελος* here, than *ἐπίσκοπος*. But of this mere *secondary* office I find nothing in the sources named; and the nature of the case shows, that the *superior* officer is in this instance, and should be, addressed. He is probably called *ἄγγελος ἐκκλησίας* in conformity to the Hebrew Chaldee, שְׁלִיחַ צִבּוּר, (possibly in reference to Hag. 1: 13 or Mal. 2: 7); and may be named *legatus ecclesiae*, because he is *delegatus ab ecclesia*, in order that he may offer their public devotions to God, and superintend their social worship. Exactly the *limits* of the office and its *specific duties*, neither the word *ἄγγελος* explains, nor does the context give us any particular information.

THE EPISTLES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

[The preparation being thus made, by the majestic appearance of the Saviour and his condescending kindness, for John to receive communications; and he being enjoined by Christ to commit to writing both the explanation of what he had already seen, and what was about to be disclosed; the seven epistles to the seven churches are first dictated to him, that he might write them down, and send them to those churches in order that they might be read. When I say *dictated*, I do not mean to affirm, that John heard with his outward ear all the contents of these epistles spoken audibly to him; for, as he was in a state of ecstasy (1: 10), so it would be difficult for us to determine how much belonged to the outward, and how much to the inward man. But being *in the spirit*, he seems to himself, at all events, to hear the words of the epistles, i. e. the contents of them, or the ideas which they comprise, are deeply impressed upon his mind and memory, so that he could easily commit them to writing. It is not necessary in this case, any more than in others, to suppose a mechanical and verbal dictation of all the words; as a king, for example, might dictate to his amanuensis *verbo tenus*. It is enough, that the inner man becomes so thoroughly imbued, in vision, with the subject matter to be contained in the epistles, that John is altogether furnished for the work of writing them, and of sending them to the churches. He receives his commission to do this from the Lord Jesus Christ; and is instructed so as to

make an official communication from him. That the writing was done at successive intervals between parts of the vision—is the first and natural impression derived from a continuous reading of the whole. Rev. 10: 4 tends much to confirm this impression; and as there are no urgent reasons against this view of the subject, it seems to me quite proper and congruous to adopt it. At the same time, we need not attach much importance to our opinion with respect to this particular matter; which, as all must confess, is not explicitly disclosed to us. Enough that John was under divine influence and guidance (*ἐν πνεύματι*) when he wrote the epistles before us, and that the Lord Jesus commissioned him to disclose to the churches the things which they contain. The epistles in themselves seem to wear the appearance of having, as it were, been dictated to the writer; and that they are even more than ordinarily the result of special divine influence as to *manner*, as well as *matter*, I should cheerfully concede, or rather, I am quite disposed to believe. They certainly in some respects do differ in manner from the remainder of the book; they differ from the simple style of John in his Gospel and in his general epistles. But, on account of the peculiar influences that operated on the writer when they were composed, this difference is not strange; nor can much be made of it in criticism, (the attempt has often been made), if these positions are substantially correct. But still the *manner* in which these epistles are composed, deserves special attention.

(1) The reader should not fail to note, that in each of the seven epistles, the address to the churches is prefaced by some of the characteristics ascribed to the Saviour in chap. i.; either by such as were displayed in his personal appearance, or by such as the writer had himself already explicitly ascribed to him. This might serve to make an impression on those who would read the epistles, like to that made upon John by the vision itself. The regularity with which this is done in all the epistles, deserves to be specially noted; e. g. Rev. 2: 1 comp. with Rev. 1: 16, 13.—2: 8. comp. with 1: 18.—2: 12 comp. with 1: 16, second clause.—2: 18 comp. with 1: 14, 15.—3: 1 comp. with 1: 20, and 1: 4, 6, which, when taken in connection, seem to imply the dominion of Christ over the seven spirits.—3: 7 comp. with 1: 5 (*ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός*), and 1: 18. From the latter the figure of the *key* may be taken, (or perhaps from Is. 21: 22), while the substantial meaning of the clause is comprised in *ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς* in 1: 5.—3: 14 comp. with 1: 5 (clause just quoted), only that in 3: 14 the scope of the expression is enlarged, and it becomes *ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ*. From all this it is plain, that the writer in composing the epistles, had his mind filled with the vision as related in chap. i.; and that the same hand is plainly employed in both. Throughout, the plan is uniform; while the manner of executing it is constantly, and, one might almost say, sedulously varied.

(2) After the salutation, and mention of attributes which characterize him who addresses the churches, next in order comes *οἶδα τὰ ἔργα σου* or *σου τὰ ἔργα*. With this declaration, which means that all their demeanor (for *ἔργα* comprises *internal* as well as external developments) is known to the Lord Jesus Christ, is associated a specification of the various characteristics of each church, as well what is matter of praise as what is matter of blame. To two of the churches, viz. that of Smyrna and Philadelphia, he gives his unqualified approbation; 2: 9. 3: 8. To the churches of Sardis and Laodicea he administers sharp rebuke; 3: 1—3. 3: 15, 16. To the churches of Ephesus, Pergamos, and Thyatira, he gives praise, and also administers rebuke, inasmuch as in some respects they deserved the one, and in some the other. But here the approbation in all cases precedes

the blame, thus showing, as Paul in his epistles was wont to show, that it was more grateful to commend than to reprove.

(3) Encouragement, admonition, exhortation, or warning, then follows, according to what the nature of the case respectively demands. Particulars are stated wherein reformation is needed; and grounds of hope and encouragement are placed before those, who are making vigourous efforts in the way of duty. All are admonished that Christ is at hand, and that he will punish or reward, as their respective conduct and character may require.

(4) The *closing* part of all the epistles exhibits a remarkable uniformity, which still is mingled with variety. Each close exhibits the admonition: *ὁ ἔχων οὖς, ἀκουσάτω τί τὸ πνεῦμα λέγει ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις,* in the very same words. In connection with this, *ὁ νικῶν* or *τῷ νικῶντι* appears, and to each person thus characterized, promises are made, all of which vary in costume and manner, but convey substantially the same ideas. To one church it is said: They shall eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God, 2: 7; to another: They shall not be harmed by the second death, 2: 11; to another: They shall eat of the hidden manna, and wear a mitre, adorned with a pellucid and precious stone in front, on which the incommunicable name [Jehovah] is engraved, 2: 17; to a fourth: They shall have kingly power, and be made splendid as the morning star, 2. 27—29; to a fifth: They shall be clothed in white, and their names be kept in the Lamb's book of life, 3: 5; to a sixth: They shall have a permanent place in the temple of God, and be enrolled as citizens belonging to the heavenly city, 3: 12; to a seventh: They shall sit down as kings, with the Redeemer, on his throne of exaltation in the heavenly world, 3: 21. Thus, while all the epistles are exactly alike as to the admonition which urges them to hearken unto him who addresses the churches, yet all at the same time vary in regard to the costume and tenor of the promises which are made, in case of final victory over spiritual enemies. Has not a writer, now, who exhibits so much grave uniformity in one case, and so pleasing a variety in another, the first adapted to solemn admonition, and the last to relieve the mind from all approach to dullness occasioned by repetition—has not such a writer, to say the least, a *tact* of no ordinary character?

One other circumstance should be noted here. This is, that the monition: *Ὁ ἔχων οὖς, ἀκουσάτω τί τὸ πνεῦμα λέγει ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις,* in the first three epistles, *precedes* the promises connected with *ὁ νικῶν κ. τ. λ.*; while in the last four of the epistles, *ὁ ἔχων ους κ. τ. λ. follows* such promises, and stands at the very close of the epistles. There is doubtless a designed and significant division into classes of *three* and *four*.

Nor should it escape the reader's observation, that in nearly all these epistles, the manner of the threat or the promise, near the close of the epistle, is intimately connected with the attributes of the Redeemer described at the commencement of it. Let the comparison be attentively made of the following passages, viz., 2: 1 with 2: 5.—2: 8 with 2: 10, 11.—2: 12 with 2: 16.—2: 18 with 2: 28.—3: 1 with 3: 5.—3: 7 with 3: 12.—3: 14 with 3: 21. Let these comparisons be carefully made, and the result must be a conviction, that more closely interwoven composition cannot well be imagined. It is surely no ordinary hand, that can perform such a task with so much skill.

From the view given above it results, that in conformity with the *trichotomy* of the book throughout, each of these epistles is divided into three parts, viz., (*a*) A reference to some of the attributes of him who addresses the church. (*b*) Disclosure of the characteristics of the church, with appropriate admonition, encouragement, or reproof. (*c*) Promises of reward to all who persevere in their

Christian course, and overcome the spiritual enemies who assault them; see at the close of No. 4 above. This trichotomy has no special influence on the interpretation of these epistles; but it is worthy of special note as it regards the rhetorical characteristics of the book.

CHAPTER II.

(1) To the angel of the church at Ephesus write: Thus saith he who holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden lamps.

Τάδε, i. e. *τά* (from *ὁ, ἡ, τό*, used as a demonstrative) and the enclitic *δε*, of which particle some of the lexicons take no specific notice; see Kühner's Gramm. § 349. *c*. Used adverbially here for *thus, so*. If we translate it *these things*, the sense is the same.

Κρατῶν, holding, i. e. exercising dominion over, having power over, holding as it were within one's grasp. The metaphorical sense is here aimed at, although the literal grasping of the stars in the hand is the imagery employed. See on v. 20 and v. 16 of chap. i. Christ's power over the churches is thus significantly expressed.

(2) I know thy works, and thy toil, and thy patience, and that thou canst not bear with those who are evil; and hast tried those who say they are apostles and yet are not, and hast found them to be dissemblers.

Ἔργα σου is here generic, embracing all developments of character, whether internal or external. The two nouns that follow are specifications of particular parts of *ἔργα*, which, among the Ephesian Christians, stood out most prominently to view.—*Κόπον* (from *κόπτω*) would seem to mean *lamentation, beating one's self*, i. e. through grief. But here it designates *toil, wearisome effort*, labour adapted to fatigue and discourage those who perform it; a sense which is not frequent in the classics, but is sometimes found there. The corresponding Hebrew is יְגִיעַ, which the Septuagint translate by *κόπος*.—*Ὑπομονήν σου, patient endurance*, i. e. of the evils brought upon them by their *κόπος*, or by the circumstances of trial in which they then were.

Δύνῃ, for *δύνασαι* the more usual form: see N. Test Gramm. § 69. II. 5.—*βαστάσαι*, literally *to bear* or *carry* a burden, etc.; figuratively, *to bear with, to endure* as a matter of toleration.—*Κακούς*, which might designate *evil* or *wicked men* at large, has here a more limited sense, inasmuch as it refers to those heretical dissemblers who were then troubling the Ephesian church; see *ψευδεῖς* in the next clause, and comp. v. 6.

Ἐπείρασας, tried, sifted, thoroughly examined; in what way, it is not said; but as the action is commended, some lawful and proper method

of trial is quite plainly implied.—*Ἀποστόλους εἶναι* indicates of course, that the evil doers in question made high claims to authority and qualifications to teach. But who they were, i. e. to what particular sect of heretics they belonged, is not certain. The name of *Nicolaitans* (v. 6) seems to be *symbolical;* as do the corresponding names in 2: 14 and 2: 20. Eichhorn conjectures, that they were disciples of John the Baptist, because Paul found some of these at Ephesus, Acts 19: 1—5. More probable is the conjecture that they were *Judaizers,* and (if we may compare 2: 14 and 2: 20 for the sake of illustration) of the *antinomian* cast, or perhaps of the Gnostic party. It may throw some light on the efforts and claims of these false apostles, should we compare 2 Cor. 2: 17. 3: 1. 11: 4, 5, 13. 12: 11. Gal. 1: 7. 2: 4. Phil. 3: 2, 3. In 2 Cor. 11: 13 these teachers are called *ψευδαπόστολοι,* as in the text before us they are named *ψευδεῖς*. Perhaps they may have been like those mentioned in 1 John 2: 18 seq. 4: 1 seq. 2 John v. 10. That some of the false teachers of that day assumed the name of *ἀπόστολοι,* is clear from the texts referred to, as well as from the passage before us. But as we have no specific history, on which we can rely, of the minute differences of the earliest heretical sects, so we must leave particulars in a state of some uncertainty. At the time when the Apocalypse was written, no doubt all was clear to the readers.

Ψευδεῖς here seems to mean *false* as to the pretences which they made of being *apostles.* Of course the implication is, that they were teachers of false things, in other words, that they taught error. Had they taught nothing but truth, they would not have been thus severely reprimanded.

(3) And still thou hast patience, and hast borne with [evils] for my name's sake, and art not wearied out.

Καὶ ὑπομονὴν ἔχεις repeats the idea before expressed in order to give intensity to the description. Notwithstanding all the trouble which the Nicolaitans had given them, in spite of all the persecutions which they had endured, they still continued to exhibit a highly commendable example of patient endurance. The two words *ἐβάστασας* and *κεκοπίακας*, as employed in this verse, constitute what grammarians call an *antanaclasis* with the words *βαστάσαι* and *κόπον* in the preceding verse, i. e. the former are a *repetition* or *echo* (for so *ἀνταπάκλασις* literally means) of the latter, and at the same time they are employed in a different sense. In v. 2, *βαστάσαι* has reference to a state of mind, i. e. to mental toleration or endurance; in v. 3, *ἐβάστασας* refers to the actual endurance of sufferings or vexations; in v. 2, *κόπον* means *wearisome toil;* in v. 3, *κεκοπίακας* (from the same root as *κόπος*) means *to*

be wearied out. The force of the expression may be thus represented: 'Thou canst not bear with false teachers, but thou canst bear with troubles and perplexities on account of me; thou hast undergone wearisome toil, but thou art not wearied out thereby.'

(4) Nevertheless I have [somewhat] against thee, because thou hast forsaken thy first love.

Ἔχω, i. e. ἔχω τι. Κατά with the Genitive here implies an accusation or charge, for it means *against.*—Ἀγάπην πρώτην—first fervour of love to Christ? Or does it designate their former spirit of benevolence and kindness toward all men? Either would make good sense; but as v. 5 exhibits the course opposite to forsaking the first love, and enjoins such an opposite course upon the Ephesian churches (ποιῆσαι τὰ πρῶτα ἔργα) as a remedy of the alleged evil, the more congruous interpretation would seem to be: 'Thou hast made defection from thy former benevolent and beneficent course of conduct, and hast need of repentance and reformation in this respect;' for so the sequel seems to speak, comp. v. 19. Eichhorn construes ἀγάπην as meaning *lenity* toward the false teachers; but where in all the New Testament is such lenity commended, still less commanded? On the contrary, the Ephesian church are commended because *they hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans*, v. 6.—Ἀφῆκας, irregular Aor. I. of ἀφίημι; the Perfect is ἄφεικα. Some of the lexicons state the Perfect erroneously, i. e. making it the same as Aor. I.

It would seem probable that the church at Ephesus, vexed with troubles from without and within, had somewhat declined from that universal kindness and good will of which they had once afforded a conspicuous example. How strongly this spirit was inculcated by the primitive teachers of true Christianity, is everywhere apparent. Comp. as specimens, Rom. 13: 9, 10. 1 Cor. 13: 13. Acts 20: 35.

(5) Remember, then, whence thou hast fallen, and repent, and do thy former works; but if not, I will come to thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent.

Πέπτωκας, *thou hast fallen*, old root πέτω, Perf. πεπέτωκα, by syncope πέπτωκα. A state of exalted Christian attainments in holiness may well be deemed the height or perfection of our nature; and decline from this may aptly be named *falling.*—Μετανόησον means *to change one's mind* or *purposes*, and along with this, a corresponding change of demeanor.—In τὰ πρῶτα ἔργα ποίησον, the word πρῶτα plainly stands for πρότερα. The Hebrew has no gradations of comparison formally made out; hence in Hebrew-Greek the superlative and comparative forms often intermingle their sense, the superlative sometimes being

comparative (as here), and sometimes conveying its appropriate meaning.

Εἰ δὲ μή, lit. *but if not*, or (which is here an equivalent) *otherwise.* Filled out the phrase would be: *εἰ δὲ μὴ ποιήσῃς.—Ἔρχομαι, venturus sum*, like the Pres. part. in Hebrew (אֲנִי בָא), it has a future sense, specially a proximate future; see N. Test. Gramm. § 136. *c.—Σοι*, Dat. after a verb of *approach;* N. Test. Gramm. § 106. 8. *b.*

Καὶ κινήσω . . . μετανοήσῃς should be all conjoined in sense. The latter half of v. 5 contains two clauses, (1) I will speedily come upon thee, i. e. for retribution. (2) I will make retribution, in case thou shalt remain impenitent, by removing thy candlestick out of its place, i. e. by extinguishing its light. The phraseology here is plainly borrowed from the phenomena of the preceding vision in chap. i. The Lord Jesus appears walking in the midst of seven golden lamps, 1: 13, i. e. surrounded by them. These lamps are symbols of the seven Asiatic churches. To remove one of them from its place, would be to withdraw it from the special and immediate presence and care of the Saviour, and thus to cut off its privileges and take away its precedence. How effectually this has been done, the present state of Ephesus fully testifies; see under 1: 11.

Ἐὰν μή, i. e. *εἰ ἂν μή, εἰ = if*, states a supposition; *μή* is a *subjective* qualified negative, adapted to a case of supposition like this, and also to the Subjunctive mode. *Ἄν* makes more prominent the conditionality of the clause. We may translate thus: *Except thou shalt repent*, or *in case thou shouldest not repent.*

(6) But still thou hast this, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans; which I also hate.

Ἀλλά, yet, i. e. notwithstanding what I have said in the way of accusation, thou hast this which is matter of approbation, viz. *that* (for so *ὅτι* imports here) *thou hatest*, etc.; where the latter clause stands in apposition with *τοῦτο*, and is explanatory of it. Such a use of the demonstrative (*οὗτος, τοῦτο*), where the clause added is intended to be made emphatic, is very common in the New Testament, and is also found in classic authors. It may be followed by *ὅτι* or *ἵνα* before the emphatic clause; N. Test. Gramm. § 123. 4. See a large mass of examples in Winer's N. Test. Gramm. § 23. 4. John and Paul abound most in this idiom.

Νικολαϊτῶν, a designation which has given rise to much discussion and conjecture, both in ancient and in modern times. Irenaeus is the first of the Christian fathers who mentions this sect, Adv. Haeres. I. 26. ed. Massuet. He traces its origin to Nicolaus, one of the seven deacons, mentioned in Acts 6: 5; and he states, that their characteristic tenets

were, the lawfulness of promiscuous intercourse with women, and of eating things offered to idols. So Eusebius, Hist. Ecc. III. 29; who also quotes a passage from Clem. Alex. Strom. II. (pp. 490, 552), the substance of which is, that Nicolaus, having a beautiful wife, was jealous of her, and being reproached with this, renounced all intercourse with her, and induced his children to live in a state of perpetual celibacy. The tradition was, in Clemens' time, that Nicolaus had said: *Παραχρᾶσθαι τῇ σαρκὶ δεῖ.* This some interpreted as enjoining illicit pleasure; but Clemens, as renouncing it and commanding to mortify carnal desires. Hence he vindicates Nicolaus, while he still supposes the sect to have arisen under his name, and by a perversion of what he had said. To the same purpose Epiphanius (Haeres. XXV.), who has made additions, which assert the dissolute life of Nicolaus, after the occurrence above related respecting his wife. Tertullian (De Prescript. Haeret. c. 33) speaks of Nicolaitans as a branch of the Gnostic family; and also as extinct; for his words are: "Sunt et nunc *alii* Nicolaitae; Gaiana [i. e. Caiana *of Cain*] haeresis dicitur." See also ibid. c. 46, ad finem. In this latter passage, he names Nicolaus as one of the seven deacons mentioned in Acts 6: 5. In like manner, respecting this last particular, do Philastrius and Augustine speak, in their treatises respecting heretics. Eusebius (in Ecc. Hist. III. 29) also speaks of the heresy of the Nicolaitans as then for a long time extinct: *Ἐπὶ σμικρότατον συνέστη χρόνον*, i. e. it lasted but a very little period. Yet Irenaeus, Epiphanius, Andreas (Comm.), and others, seem to speak of the Nicolaitans as a sect still in existence, and of a proselyting spirit. How shall these conflicting opinions be reconciled? They cannot be; and the aspect of the whole matter is such as to show, that various floating reports gave rise to these patristical traditions respecting the Nicolaitans. Vitringa rejects the whole with scorn (Comm. in loc.), so far as Nicolaus, one of the seven deacons, is concerned. Mosheim, instead of strenuously defending the origin of the sect from Nicolaus, (as Ewald affirms, Comm. in loc.), in his Ecc. Hist. (P. II. V. 15), considers the matter a doubtful one; and in his Commentt. de Rebus Christ. (§ 69), he says explicitly: "Habent res factionis hujus [sc. Nicolaitarum] plurimum obscuritatis, quam frustra ingenio fugare conamur." He thinks it most probable, that the Nicolaitans of Epiphanius and the later fathers were a branch of the Gnostics, so named from some leader among them called Nicolaus. However this may be, (improbable I cannot deem it), it seems to be quite clear, that nothing definite can be gathered from ecclesiastical history, respecting the existence and character of a sect in reality bearing the appellation of *Nicolaitans*, during the primitive age of Christianity.

Most commentators, therefore, since the days of Vitringa, have pre-

ferred another method of solving the difficulty before us. This is, to consider the name *Nicolaitans* as symbolical; like that of *Balaam* in Rev. 2: 14, 15, and *Jezebel* in 2: 20. In this case it compares well with the Hebrew בִּלְעָם, *Balaam* = בַּעַל עָם, *dominus* vel *tyrannus populi*; for *Νικόλαος* is compounded of *νίκος victoria* and *λαός populus*. Another explanation may be given of the Hebrew word בִּלְעָם, which results in the like conclusion, viz. בִּלַּע עָם, *he destroyed the people*, or (using the verb in the common Syriac sense) *he prevailed over* or *conquered the people*. If the Nicolaitans were like those who are mentioned in v. 14, 15, (and this likeness the latter verse asserts); and if they taught (like Balaam), that it was lawful to eat things offered to idols and to commit fornication; they might well be named *Balaamites*, i. e. *Νικολαΐται*. It was common among the early Hebrew Christians, to give persons of Hebrew origin a Greek name corresponding in sense with their Hebrew one; e. g. כֵּיפָא, *Πέτρος*; עִבְרָיָא, *Δορκάς*, etc. So here, *Νικολαΐται* = בַּעַל עָם or בִּלְעָם. The position of most commentators belonging to this class is, that merely the writer of the epistle applies such a name, in a symbolical or figurative way, to the party who are stigmatized in the present case. So Janus, de Nicolaitis; Heumann, Poecile, II. p. 391; Vitringa in loc., and in Observ. Sac. IV. 9; Storr, Apologie der Offenb. p. 260; Münscher, Ueber die Nicolaiten, in Gabl. Journal, V. pp. 17—29. So also in the Commentaries of Lange, Eichhorn, Matthaei, and others. As I cannot fully accede to this opinion, it will be proper briefly to subjoin my reasons.

The manner in which the appellation (Nicolaitans) is used here and in v. 15, would seem to import that the name was current in the churches at Ephesus and Pergamus. That there were some persons in these churches, who practised the vices named in v. 14, there can be no good ground of doubt; comp. v. 20, which shows that the same immoralities were practised also at Thyatira. Now as these were the very same vices into which the Israelites of old fell (Num. 25: 1—3. 1 Cor. 10: 7, 8); and into which they fell, as it would seem, through the devices of *Balaam* (v. 14); so those who practised them were called *Balaamites* = *Νικολαΐται* in Greek as above stated. Whether some person by the name of *Nicolaus* was actually their leader, as Wolfius supposes (Curae in loc.); or whether mere popular impulse, guided by the nature of the case, invented and bestowed the appellation; must remain an uncertainty. Nor can it be of any importance to determine this. It was a characteristic and significant appellation, a lucky hit (as we say) in the application of epithets. The whole aspect of the various cases, in vs. 6, 15, and 20, seems to my mind, plainly to denote, that the name was actually current at the time, and that the practices intended to be designated by the use and application of it were then well known, so that no doubt

could exist in the mind of the reader with regard to the meaning of John's words. As to the rise of such a sect among Christians, one would indeed naturally think it to be strange. Yet the *abuse* of such declarations as Paul makes in 1 Cor. 8: 4. 10: 25, and specially in 1 Cor. 6: 12, might easily give rise, among the ignorant and viciously inclined, to the indiscriminate eating of meats, and to the indulgence of carnal desires. Still these very things had been expressly forbidden by the apostles, Acts 15: 29. 21: 25; and therefore such vices are mentioned here, as we might well expect, with an expression of severe displeasure against them. Such a view of the case seems to afford the most natural and easy solution of the difficulty in regard to the passage before us; and by taking this course, we are unembarrassed with the obstacles that lie in the way of tracing the heresy in question to Nicolaus one of the seven deacons; while we educe from the passage a very significant meaning.*

(7) He who hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him who overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of my God.

But who, or what is *τὸ πνεῦμα* in this case? Is it the Spirit who dwelt in Christ (John 3: 34), and which "God gave him *not by measure*," i. e. without measure? Or is it the Spirit who was in John during his prophetic ecstasy? Comp. 1: 10. The first inquiry to be made, in order to answer these questions, seems naturally to be: Who is it that now speaks, i. e. who utters the words of v. 7? It is manifestly the Saviour who speaks; but he addresses the churches through John, his disciple and servant. Just before his departure, Jesus made to his disciples a promise of sending them the Holy Spirit (John 15: 26), who was to teach them all things (John 14: 26). Now whether we consider this Spirit as being given to John, and so, through him, addressing the churches; or whether we regard the Spirit as manifesting his will, through the Saviour, unto the churches who were to be warned and instructed; the difference of signification in the passage will not be very important. The Saviour possessed a human nature, as well as a divine; and to this human nature the Spirit was imparted without measure, John 3: 24. Ewald says: "Haud dubie *spiritus prophetiae est*, quo

* For the older literature in regard to this question, the student should consult Wolfius, Curae in loc. For the more recent literature, besides the sources already named, he may consult Walch, Hist. der Ketzereien, I. p. 167 seq. Scheffler-Tiburtius, de Nicolaitis, 1825. These writers advocate the old opinion. In Constitutt. Apostol. VI. 8, Ignat. Ep. ad Trall. c. 11, the heretics in question are called *ψευδώνυμοι Νικολαΐται*; which would appear to favour the idea, that the authors of these compositions rejected the notion that these heretics originated from the Nicolaus mentioned in Acts 6: 5.

correptus (Rev. 1: 10) Johannes omnia haec praescribit." In Rev. 19: 10 we are told, that "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy," i. e. it is a prophetic Spirit which gives testimony respecting Jesus; so that the testimony here considered as given by Jesus himself, or by John his servant, proceeds, in either case, from the same prophetic Spirit who addresses the churches.

As to the formula *ὁ ἔχων οὖς, ἀκουσάτω κ. τ. λ.*, Jesus was accustomed to repeat the same after the addresses which he made to those who surrounded him; see Matt. 11: 15. 13: 9. Luke 8: 8. It seems to have been a not unusual caution given by teachers to hearers, and to mean: 'Let him who heareth what is said, well consider it.'

Τῷ νικῶντι — not *homini puro*, as Eichhorn, who compares the Syriac ܙܟܝ = זַךְ *purus*, but—*vincenti*, i. e. to him who overcomes, viz. the world, and particularly to him who perseveres in his christian course, and rises superior to all obstacles and all opposition made by persecutors—to him will be given, etc. Throughout all the epistles here, and indeed throughout the whole book, it is perfectly plain that the writer is composing his work *ingruente persecutione*. In fact, the great design of the book originally was, to comfort and encourage those who were in circumstances of distress, specially on account of persecution. The opposite of *ὁ νικῶν* is given in Rev. 21: 8, viz. *οἱ δειλοὶ καὶ οἱ ἄπιστοι*, i. e. the timid and those who confide not in the divine promises. As to the repetition of the pronoun *αὐτῷ*, see Vol. I. p. 248, as to general usage. I may remark, however, that it is here superfluous as to the essential meaning, but is added to give intensity, (comp. 2: 17. 6: 4); and the usage, moreover, of repeating the pronoun together with the noun or subject to which it refers is very common in Hebrew. Heb. Gramm. § 543, comp. also § 545. § 546. Constructions like this are very common in the New Testament; see Mark 5: 2. 9: 28. Matt. 26: 71. They are not uncommon even in the Classics; see N. Test. Gramm., § 121. n. 4.

Φαγεῖν ἐκ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς is the *object* of the verb *δώσω*, according to a very frequent usage of the Infinitive mode, which may be subject or object. The imagery here is drawn from the garden of Eden, in which was the *tree of life*, adapted to make the natural life of man perpetual, Gen. 3: 22. *The tree of life* is here spoken of, beyond all doubt, in reference to a *celestial* paradise; comp. Rev. 22: 2, where it is spoken of as belonging to the *γῆ καινή*, as an appendage of the abode of the blessed. Meaning: 'To him who perseveres in his fidelity to me, and triumphs over all opposition and persecution, will I give an abundance in the future world, with life everlasting.'—*φαγεῖν ἐκ* makes the expression more specific. The Genitive after *φαγεῖν* might be used without the preposition, inasmuch as the verb has a *partitive* sense, and

φαγεῖν τινος is normal.—ξύλου ζωῆς = life-giving tree, or life-preserving tree.

Παραδείσῳ, a word of oriental derivation. Thus in Sanscrit, *paradesha* or *paradisha*; in Armenian, *pardes*. The Sept. employ it for גַּן in Gen. 2: 8 seq. Xenophon, Diodorus Siculus, and Josephus, also use it; see Rob. Lex. In the New Testament, we find it in Luke 23: 43. 2 Cor. 12: 4, in each place, as here, designating the abode of blessed spirits. It is a frequent word among the Rabbins in the like sense. See many quotations from them in Schoettgen, Horae Heb. in loc. By the heathen writers, both oriental and Greek, it is employed to designate a *pleasure-garden*, particularly a royal one which surrounded the king's palace or citadel. The tropical sense of it here is evident; and the imagery is certainly vivid.

Ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ μου — in the vulgate text: ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ παραδείσου τοῦ θεοῦ. But the weight of authority seems rather against the vulgate reading. Some have felt a difficulty here on account of the μου after θεοῦ. But why should they? Does not the newly risen Saviour speak of MY *God*, in John 20: 17? And does he not say the same in Rev. 3: 2, and four times repeated in 3: 12? Why might he not say *my God*, as well as say *my Father*? For the Father is God. Besides; had he not a *human* nature, as well as a divine? And could he not truly say, in respect to this, *my Father*, or *my God*? Those who make such objections seem to forget that Christ is θεάνθρωπος, and that what he says, at any time, is to be applied to the one nature or to the other *pro re nata*. All serious difficulty vanishes, when the matter is viewed in this light. We may add, also, that so long as the *human* nature remains in union with the divine, such language will never be inappropriate. Whether this will be *always*, perhaps the Bible has not expressly said; yet it is difficult for us even to entertain a supposition which would deny this. See what Paul has said, 1 Cor. 15: 24—28; which, however, goes absolutely and positively no farther than to declare the delivering up to the Father of all delegated and mediatorial authority.

(8) And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: Thus saith the First and the Last, who was dead and revived.

Πρῶτος καὶ ἔσχατος, see remarks on 1: 17, and comp. 1: 17, 18.—Ἔζησεν here = ἀνέζησεν, i. e. *came to life, revived*; see Rev. 13: 14. 20: 4, 5. Comp. also ζάω in Matt. 9: 18. John 5: 25. 11: 25. Acts 1: 3. 25: 19. Rom. 6: 10, 13. 2 Cor. 13: 4. Our English version renders ἔζησε, *is alive*. The version is not untrue as to the material sense; but the shade of meaning as well as the expression, in our text, assigns both the death and the return to life to the *past* time; strictly in accor-

dance with fact. Appropriately does the speaker claim to be a *living* Saviour in the most extensive sense of the word, for how else could he perform the promises which he makes, or execute the threatenings which he utters?

(9) I know thy works, and thine affliction, and thy poverty (although thou art rich), and the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and are not, but the synagogue of Satan.

Θλίψιν may be understood as having reference to the sufferings connected with *πτωχείαν* and *βλασφημίαν*; or it may have a more generic sense, and mean all the sufferings and straits to which the profession of Christianity reduced the church of Smyrna at that period. I prefer the latter as being much more expressive, more characteristic of the times, and agreeing better with the order of the words.—*Πτωχείαν* is doubtless here to be understood in its literal and usual acceptation. The article before it, and also before *θλίψιν*, supplies the place of *σου*, and is so translated above. The converse of *πτωχείαν*, viz. *πλούσιος εἶ*, is clearly to be understood in a secondary or spiritual sense; for the object of the speaker is to show, that while they are *poor* in one sense, i. e. literally, they are *rich* in another, i. e. spiritually.

Βλασφημίαν ἐκ . . . ἑαυτούς. Here *ἐκ* marks definitely and emphatically the agents from whom the defamatory accusations proceeded, and is therefore more specific than *βλασφημίαν τῶν λεγόντων κ. τ. λ.*, which might possibly be taken in an active or in a passive sense. *Ἐκ* makes the expression so definite, that the meaning is certain.

Ἰουδαίους—in the figurative sense, i. e. the true Israel? comp. Rom. 9: 6—8. According to this mode of exposition, the speaker means to say, that those who slandered the church at Smyrna, and occasioned trouble to them, professed to be true converts to Christianity, but were not in fact so; in other words, they did not belong to the spiritual Israel, i. e. the seed of Abraham by faith (comp. Gal. 3: 7), but in reality belonged to the synagogue of Satan, i. e. to that synagogue in which Satan held a predominance, or to those professed worshippers whose temper and conduct Satan influenced. If this be the meaning, then there seems to be evident reference to the conduct of Jewish zealots, who went so far, when engaged in warm dispute, as to make accusations of Christians before the heathen magistrates, in order to have vengeance inflicted upon them; comp. 2 Thess. 1: 3—6. See also the spirit of the Judaizers as represented in the epistle to the Galatians. It may be, however, that the meaning of the passage before us is, that the *Jews*, who were not professed Christians, but who cherished a fiery zeal in favour of the Mosaic rites and forms, and consequently felt not a little enmity against Christians, were the persecutors here alluded to. Almost all of

the persecutors of Christians, in the primitive age, were first excited to persecution by this class of men. Construed in this way, the speaker means to say, that they are not even so much as *true Jews*, which they profess to be, but of the synagogue of Satan. The extreme bitterness of spirit which these defamers exhibited, would seem to incline us to this latter interpretation; indeed I can scarcely doubt that it is the right one. We can find a touching narrative of what was actually done to the church at Smyrna, at a later period, under the reign of Aurelius and Lucius Verus, when Polycarp suffered martyrdom; which may serve as a comment on the conduct of the Jews in the present case. Eusebius (Hist. Ecc. IV. 15) has told the story at length, with appeal to ancient documents; and by this it appears, that when Polycarp was apprehended and brought before the Proconsul at Smyrna, the Jews were the most furious of all the multitude in demanding his condemnation. When the mob, after he was sentenced to death, set about gathering fuel to burn him, "the Jews, *μάλιστα προθύμως, ὡς ἔθος αὐτοῖς*, ran to procure the fuel." And when, inasmuch as the burning failed, the blessed martyr had been transfixed with weapons, the *Jews* besought and urged the magistrate, that his body might not be given up to Christians. Possibly, at the very time when the epistle before us was written, Polycarp might have belonged to the church at Smyrna—as he lived to extreme old age, and history represents him as saying before the Proconsul, that he had served Christ eighty-five years; yet, if the Apocalypse was written (as I doubt not it was) *before* the destruction of Jerusalem, this cannot well be made out. Be this as it may, the temper of those who belonged to the *synagogue of Satan* is sufficiently exhibited in the narration of Eusebius, and also of the church at Smyrna in their epistle respecting the death of Polycarp; from which epistle Eusebius has largely quoted.

The boasting of the Jews (comp. 3: 9), in this case, with regard to their *name*, in which they were wont to glory, may be well illustrated by comparing 2 Cor. 11: 22. Rom. 2: 17. Phil. 3: 5. Another appellation of honour was קְהַל יְהוָה, Num. 16: 3. 20: 4, saepe al. Instead of this, *συναγωγὴ τοῦ Σατανᾶ* is the appellation here given, which at once characterizes and condemns them.

(10) Fear not at all the things which thou art about to suffer. Behold the devil will cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tempted; and ye shall have affliction ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.

Ὁ διάβολος. He had just said, that the persecutors belonged to *the synagogue of Satan*, i. e. they were under the influence of that malignant being. As the primary agent, that being is here designated. Men were his instruments, (voluntary ones indeed), in the present case.

Prison was the first degree of punishment, when supposed malefactors were arrested, Acts 12: 3, 4. 16: 23.

Ἵνα πειρασθῆτε. The turn of this phrase depends on the meaning given to ἵνα. If a *telic* sense be given, viz. *in order that*, then the design of Satan is signified, which was to tempt them, by subjecting them to suffering, to recant their Christian profession. If an *ecbatic* sense be given to ἵνα, viz. *so that*, then the rendering should be: So that ye must undergo trial, i. e. trial will be the consequence of your imprisonment. I prefer the former, because the ἔκβασις, in this case, is given in a subsequent clause. But if any prefer the second mode of interpretation, they may compare Gen. 22: 1. Ex. 16: 4. James 1: 2, 3, in which they may see that *trial* is not only compatible with the divine government of the church, but an ordinary part of its discipline.

Ἡμερῶν δέκα, i. e. a short time, a few days, or a moderate space of time; comp. Gen. 24: 55. Dan. 1: 12, 14. 1 Sam. 25: 38. Neh. 5: 18. Jer. 42: 7. Acts 25: 6. Let the reader mark well the *symbolic* use of number, in this case; for the exact literal one will be insisted on, I trust, by no one.

Θανάτου refers here, probably, to a violent death. Christians were not to shrink even from this. In case they remained faithful, *a crown of life* would be given to them, i. e. a crown of glory in that world where immortal life is to be enjoyed; comp. 1 Pet. 5: 4. James 1: 12, and specially Rev. 4: 4. The main idea is like that in Rev. 2: 7, φαγεῖν ἐκ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς; but the difference between the two cases is, that here the exalted and glorious state of the martyrs is more distinctly marked by the nature of the imagery employed.

(11) He who hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. He who overcometh, shall not be harmed by the second death.

Ἀδικηθῇ, lit. *to suffer injustice;* but secondarily, as here, *to suffer harm* or *injury*. The *second* death is that which follows the general resurrection and judgment, Rev. 20: 14. 21: 8. This is here opposed to *the crown of life*. On the use of οὐ μή see Gramm. § 148. 4. Meaning: 'The faithful martyr shall receive a crown of unfading glory (1 Pet. 5: 4), and never experience any other death than that of the body.' The promise to the faithful is, as often in the writings of John, announced both in the affirmative and negative form.

(12) And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write: Thus saith he who hath the sharp two-edged sword;

Ῥομφαίαν δίστομον, ὀξεῖαν, see 1: 16, with the remarks there made. The manner in which the idea of such a sword issuing from the mouth came into the mind of the writer, seems to have been as stated in those remarks. We may suppose that when the Saviour, in the vision related

in chap. i, uttered words, as they proceeded from his mouth the halitus which accompanied them assumed, in the view of John, the form of an igneous two-edged sword; thus indicating the awful power of his declarations, and specially of his condemning sentence. Here he is about to reprove, in part; and they who are addressed, are warned of the power of his reproof by the writer's employing this imagery.—*Ἔχων*, in this case, of course does not mean to possess as an attribute, but (as often elsewhere) to *have* or *hold at one's disposal*. Meaning: 'He, who has power by a single word to chastise, or even to destroy, addresses you; hearken then to his warnings!'

(13) I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is; and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in the days in which Antipas [was] my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Ποῦ κατοικεῖς, i. e. I know well in what an impious and cruel place thou dwellest.—*Ὅπου . . . σατανᾶ*, even where the very metropolis of Satan is, or where he sits enthroned, i. e. where he exercises his power of stirring up hatred and persecution in a peculiar and successful manner. This is explained by the context, which states that Antipas had been actually slain there, on account of the Christian faith; an allegation the like of which is not made in respect to any of the other cities where the churches addressed had their abode. Ewald refers to Andreas as maintaining, that the city of Pergamos was distinguished above all the Asiatic cities for *idolatry*. He represents it, indeed, as *κατειδωλος*, but particularly as distinguished for its bitter enmity to Christians. Here Aesculapius was worshipped with much zeal; and Wetstein has accumulated passages from the classics in order to prove this;—to what purpose, as it regards the plain and simple interpretation of our text, it would be difficult to show. He has done the same, in order to illustrate *νεκρὸς καὶ ἔζησε* in v. 8; which surely is labour lost. Who will suppose, that the fabled power of Aesculapius to restore life, is alluded to in these cases, when there are other plainer and more appropriate sources to which the language may be referred? It is not the *heathen* mythology which here comes into view, but the Hebrew demonology, so far as Satan is concerned.

Κρατεῖς τὸ ὄνομά μου. They had professed to be Christians; they had taken the name of Christ upon them; and to this profession and name they steadfastly adhered, amidst all the terrors of persecution.—*Καὶ οὐκ . . . πίστιν μου*, the same sentiment again, for substance, in the way of negation, i. e. a *λιτότης*, as the grammarians call it. See examples of this usage in heathen writers, in Kuinoel on John 1: 3, 20. To deny the Christian faith would also involve the act of letting go or of

renouncing the Christian name. The church at Pergamos had done neither the one nor the other.

Ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις . . . ὁ πιστός. "Notabilis est," says Ewald, "hoc versu *constructionis negligentia*, quam alibi frustra in Apocalypsi quaeras." This *negligentia* some have attempted to remedy, by omitting ἐν αἷς and writing Ἀντιπᾶ (Gen.); others, by throwing out ὅς; but the Codices, so far as yet known, will not allow us to do either. Can we choose, then, an easier method of solution, which is by supposing ἦν to be implied after Ἀντίπας? The omission of the verb εἰμί in cases without number, every intelligent reader must be acquainted with; see Rom. 11: 11. 1 Cor. 15: 21. Matt. 27: 4. Mark 5: 9. Heb. 10: 18. Rom. 4: 13, et al. saepe. If any one should say, that in all these cases the noun connected with ἐστί *implied*, is the *subject* of the proposition; or that the *predicate* could not have the article, in case we insert ἦν after Ἀντίπας; let him compare 1 Cor. 15: 56. Phil. 3: 19. 1 Cor. 11: 3. The difficulty with the supposition does not lie in this; for the article, in this case, would be demanded in order properly to specify μάρτυς emphatically. It lies merely in the fact, that *ellipses* of the verb εἰμί are mostly of the third person singular of the *present* tense, (a few in the third plural); see Winer's Gramm. § 66. 2. But it is also true, that in the Apocalypse we have a large number of instances in which the Imperfect of εἰμί (ἦν) is omitted, and must be mentally supplied; e. g. Rev 1: 16 twice. In 4: 1, 5—7 are repeated cases where ἦν seems to be omitted, both with a participle and without it; also in 4: 5, καιόμεναι, 6: 2, 5. 7: 9. 10: 2, 8 (bis). 19: 11, 12, 13. 21: 14, etc. All these latter cases, however, are somewhat different from the one before us, inasmuch as a *participle* is expressed, which must be joined with the implied *past* tense of εἰμί. In this way, i. e. by supplying ἦν, Vitringa, Daubuz, and others unhesitatingly explain the clause before us. But if we hesitate to adopt this method, we may resort to the context, in order to determine what verb we must suppose to be implied. This will afford us either οὐκ ἠρνήσατο αὐτήν, sc. πίστιν, or else ἐκράτησεν αὐτό, sc. ὄνομα. I should prefer the latter, because it is the more leading and prominent idea. It is indeed rather an uncommon ellipsis; and Ewald, as we have already seen, says that the like of it is nowhere else to be found in the Apocalypse. Yet if we concede this, there are many cases of ellipsis in the Greek classics not less striking, nor less unexpected by the reader, than this; as any one may see by consulting a full exemplification of them in the grammars.

I can, after all, scarcely refrain from believing, that ὁ πιστὸς, ὃς ἀπεκτάνθη was originally written ὁ πιστὸς ἀπεκτάνθη; for thus all is plain and facile. It is easy to see how the intruder ὅς came in, i. e. in consequence of the ending of the preceding word. The Syriac version

here does not aid us; for it reads thus: "My witness, who was my faithful one, who was killed among you." It is evident that the translator found some difficulty in the text; for this must have led him thus to paraphrase it.

Of the Antipas here named we know nothing further; excepting that Andreas (Comm. written near the close of Cent. V.) mentions, that he had read a *martyrology* of him. Eusebius (Ecc. Hist. IV. 15) mentions the names of several persons at Pergamos, who suffered martyrdom about the same time as Polycarp; which, however, was long after the death of Antipas. In the Acta Sanctorum (II. pp. 3, 4) is a martyrology of Antipas from a Greek Ms.; but it is full of fable and fiction, which a later age had added to the original story.

Ὅπου ὁ σατανᾶς κατοικεῖ, a repetition of what is said in the first part of the verse; which shows the intensity of the writer's feelings in regard to the malice and devices of Satan, as exhibited at Pergamos.

(14) But I have a few things against thee, that thou hast there some who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things offered to idols and to commit fornication.

Ἔχω κατά σου ὀλίγα, a little different in form from *ἔχω κατά σου* in v. 4, but substantially of the same meaning. There *τί* is implied, i. e. *somewhat;* here *ὀλίγα, a few things*, is expressed. There, the complaint is that their *first love* had become cold, while still it is conceded that they are zealously opposed to the Nicolaitans; here, the church tolerates these heretics with lenity, or at least with a kind of indifference; but in respect to other things, they are not complained of.

Ἔχεις implies that the church has, within its own body, the Balaamites or Nicolaitans. Otherwise they would not be responsible for the toleration of them.—*Διδαχὴν Βαλαάμ*. What this was, may be learned from Num. 25: 1, 2 comp. with Num. 31: 16, from which it appears, that, through the counsel of Balaam, the Moabites and Midianites combined to tempt the children of Israel by idol worship connected with female devotees to it; so that the Jewish people committed fornication and ate of the idol sacrifices; for such must be the meaning of Num. 25: 2: "And the people ate, and bowed down to their gods," viz. to those of Moab. Ewald is in an error, when he says that *εἰδωλόθυτα* are not mentioned in the history of Balaam, for they are plainly implied in the phrase quoted. The reference, however, in this passage, is not merely to the example of Balaam, so far as criminality is alleged, but also to a principle established by the apostolic decree in Acts 15: 28 seq., where all the churches are required *ἀπέχεσθαι εἰδωλοθύτων . . . καὶ πορνείας*. Balaam was an odious name among the Hebrews, and

for good reasons; to refer then to vices which he taught, was to stigmatize them as peculiarly odious.

Ἐδίδασκε τῷ Βαλάκ is an offence to the critics, because verbs of teaching govern two Accusatives, the one of the thing taught, and the other of the person who is taught. Here βαλεῖν κ. τ. λ. is the thing taught, and the person is put in the Dative. But the Hebrews, with whom, in such a case, the same idiom as that of the Greeks is the usual one, do not always follow it; e. g. לְפִנֵי, i. e. with לְ before the person, Job 21: 22. So לְ חוֹרָה, Deut. 33: 10. Hos. 10: 12 (bis). Besides this, however, there is another method of explanation, viz. by translating thus: 'Who taught, *by Balak*, to cast, etc,' i. e. who used Balak as his instrument, in thus enticing the children of Israel. The persons that were taught in this case would be, by implication, the Moabites and Midianites, who were directed by Balak to entice the Hebrews; and that they did so, the sacred history relates. But after all, the reading τῷ is very doubtfully supported, having only A. C. and 11. in its favour. Wetstein, Vater, and Tittmann, all read τόν; Griesbach, Knapp, and Lachmann, τῷ. Mill, ἐν τῷ βαλάκ, i. e. in the history of Balak. *Τόν* is *normal* and is to be preferred, if supported by better authority; but as to the question, whether it is better in this case, the critics are divided. That rule of criticism, (here applied), which prefers the reading that is *not* normal, in a case of tolerable support, is to be received with much caution at the best. If a writer shows that he is well acquainted with a particular idiom, and if he usually follows it, the presumption is certainly in favour of it, when other things are equal. But if τῷ is to be admitted here, it may, as a last resort, be regarded as the *Dativus commodi*, which would make a good sense; just as, in the history of Balaam, Num. 22: 6, Balak says to the prophet, Ἄρασαί μοι τὸν λαὸν τοῦτον, *curse* FOR ME *this people*. So Bengel; and certainly it is not a strained exegesis.

Βαλεῖν σκάνδαλον is a Hebraistic expression, and has its origin in the idiomatic expressions, "way of the righteous, way of the Lord, way of wisdom, etc.," in which way all good men are said *to walk*. Now a stumbling block either occasions a fall, or impedes one's progress, when placed on a way. So temptation to sin is a *stumbling block* in the way of the righteous, or in the path of duty. The temptations which through the counsel of Balaam were placed before the Hebrews, occasioned the sin of many, and the destruction of 24,000 by the plague, Num. 25: 9. —Πορνεῦσαι is often used as a *generic* word, in which case it designates pollution in general, without reference to the state of parties as married or unmarried.

Φαγεῖν εἰδωλόθυτα. A feast upon the viands which had been offered to an idol, where gluttony and rioting were common, which feast was

attended by numerous prostitutes devoted to the impure rites of idolatry, would almost necessarily lead those who joined in it to idolatry and impurity. Hence the apostolic decree in Acts 15: 28 seq.; and hence an abhorrence of sharing in such a feast is here expressed.

(15) So thou also hast those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, in like manner.

Ὁμοίως, at the close, is best supported, and seems entitled to reception. Other readings are ὃ μισῶ (Text. Recept.); ὁ μισῶ ὁμοίως; ἣν μισῶ; ὁμοίως ἣν μισῶ. Mill and Vater prefer the vulgate text.

Οὕτως, *so*, i. e. in like manner as Balak retained a false prophet who misled the Hebrews, so thou retainest Balaamites, i. e. those who teach the things like to those which Balaam taught.—Τὴν διδαχὴν τῶν Νικολαϊτῶν I take to mean the same as the preceding τὴν διδαχὴν Βαλαάμ. At least the Nicolaitans here are plainly the same as in v. 6 above; so that the heresy in question, as it would seem, pervaded the churches at Ephesus, Pergamus, and also Thyatira, comp. v. 20, where the same vices are mentioned. Ὁμοίως, *in like manner*, i. e. the heretics among you hold and teach the doctrine of the Nicolaitans in like manner as Balaam held and taught his doctrine; in other words, they teach so as to lead some to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication. How any bearing the name of Christians could teach thus, it is difficult at first to imagine; but see the remarks on this subject, under v. 6. above.

I do not feel quite sure, after all, that the speaker in this case does not mean to aver, that there are *two* classes of heretics, in the bosom of the church at Pergamos. If so, then we have nothing, either in v. 6. or v. 15, which defines the errors of the Nicolaitans. Moreover, on this ground they would seem to be distinguished from the Balaamites—*how* distinguished, we have only uncertain tradition to determine. On the whole, however, a comparison of vs. 6, 13, 14, and 20, leaves the impression on my mind, that the same pestilential heresy existed in each of the three respective churches, and that it was a matter of indifference, whether it was named *the doctrine of Balaam*, or *the doctrine of the Nicolaitans*, inasmuch as the Hebrew and Greek appellatives (Balaam and Nicolaus) have one and the same meaning. The supposition of *two* heretical sects, makes our text at first view more facile of interpretation; but the other exegesis given above, seems to be capable of a good defence.

(16) Repent therefore; and if thou dost not, I will come to thee quickly, and make war with them by the sword of my mouth.

Σοί, *to thee*, i. e. the Saviour announces his intention to visit that church.

Yet extreme punishment is not designed for the whole; for he says *πολεμήσω μετ' αὐτῶν*, i. e. with the Nicolaitans. I have retained the manner of the original in my version, because it may be retained consistently with our idiom. But we should more readily express the sentiment thus: I will war against them with the sword of my mouth.

Ῥομφαίαν τοῦ στόματος is the sword before mentioned in v. 12 above, and also in 1: 16. Here the application is such, that we recognize at once the nature and design of the imagery. "He *said*, and it was done; he *commanded*, and it stood fast." The sentence by him of condemnation and excision is fatal. His sword can neither be resisted nor warded off; comp. Heb. 4: 12. On the nature of the imagery, see under 1: 16. I cannot think, with Wetstein and Herder, that there is any reference here to the sword of the angel who resisted Balaam, Num. 22: 23. The two cases are of a tenor quite different.

(17) He who hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To him who overcometh—to him will I give of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name engraved, which no one knoweth except he that receiveth it.

On *τῷ νικῶντι κ. τ. λ.*, see above on v. 7.—*Τοῦ μάννα τοῦ κεκρυμμένου*, a vivid image of sustenance, or rather of enjoyment, in a future world. It is easy to trace its source. In Ex. 16: 32—34, God commands that a pot of the manna rained down upon the Israelites should be gathered, and deposited in the ark of the testimony, for a memorial to all future generations of what the Lord had done. Comp. Heb. 9: 4. In Ps. 78: 24, 25, manna is called דְּגַן הַשָּׁמַיִם and לֶחֶם אַבִּירִים, i. e. *the corn of heaven* and *the bread of the mighty ones*, i. e. (probably) of angels, as in our English version. So in Ps. 105: 40, it is called לֶחֶם שָׁמַיִם, *the bread of heaven*. The *excellence* of this nourishment is thus strongly characterized. Then, in the next place, the joys of the blessed in a future world are often represented in the Scriptures under the image of a *feast;* see Rev. 3: 20. 19: 9. Now as manna was rained down from heaven, and manna is *angel's food*, it is very easy and natural for the mind to think of the manna laid up in heaven (so to speak) as being in store for the saints, when they shall be admitted to associate with the angels. *Κεκρυμμένου* is to be taken in the sense of the Hebrew צָפוּן, *laid up, stored in a safe and secret place.* Still, the form of the expression has reference probably to Ex. 16: 32—34. The manna, which was deposited by divine command in the ark of the covenant, the Jews regarded as a specimen of heavenly food. Hence they invented many fictions concerning it. One was, that Jeremiah the prophet, just before the destruction of Jerusalem, commanded the tabernacle [which the author of this fiction, as it would seem, supposed was

deposited in the most Holy Place], and the ark of the testimony, and the altar of incense, to follow him to mount Sinai; and there he hid them in a cave, to be brought out again only in the days of the Messiah; see 2 Macc. 2: 4—7. Comp. with this the apocryphal story of Jeremiah, in Fabr. Cod. Apoc. V. Test. p. 1112 seq. Abulfar. Hist. Dynast. p. 57. The reader will find an abundance of Rabbinical passages, designed to illustrate and confirm this tradition, in Eisenmenger's Entdeckt. Judenthum, II. p. 856 seq., and in Wetstein in loc., and Schoettgen Hor. Heb. in loc. In the times of the Messiah, as it would seem, the Jews expected that the manna thus hidden would be discovered, and distributed to his followers, as well as laid up again in the temple. That John however had any reference to this fabulous tradition, there is no satisfactory evidence. Eichhorn, as is usual with him, traces the expression in the text to this fable; but there is enough in the Scriptures, independently of this, to account for the figurative expression here employed. Why should we suppose the writer to go elsewhere for his sources, when he shows throughout his book a mind most thoroughly imbued with the Hebrew Scriptures, and that of all sources they are the most favourite one, and most frequently resorted to by him? As the manna was laid up in the ark, no one could even approach it but the high-priest, who, once in each year, went into the most holy place in order to make atonement. Yet even he could not taste of it. But under the new dispensation, where all are to be made "kings and priests unto God," Christians may enter for themselves into the most holy place, (for the veil is rent), and may even partake of the manna deposited there. Yet all this, it will be remembered, is but imagery employed in order to portray the ample and delightful enjoyments of the faithful in the world to come.

Ἐπὶ τὴν ψῆφον . . . . λαμβάνων has been, as it would seem, a real *crux interpretum*. The reason of this does not appear to be so much in the difficulty of the passage itself, as in the sources to which resort has been had in order to explain it. *Greek* sources of imagery have been sought for, while only Hebrew ones can satisfactorily solve the difficulty.

(1) Vitringa, Lange, and many others, have referred to the Greek usage of absolving those who were tried on the ground of any accusation, by *white balls* or *stones*, and condemning by *black* ones. But this does not well compare with the case before us. There, the balls were thrown into an urn; here the white stone is given to the victor himself. There, was no inscription on the balls; here, is a new and secret name inscribed. We may also add, that such imagery would naturally convey the idea of an *accusation* made on the part of some one against the victor; whereas it may well be supposed, that the writer here would have been disposed to say, with Paul: *Τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ ἐκλεκτῶν θεοῦ?*

(2) Grotius, Eichhorn, and others, refer to the *tessera* given to the victor in the Olympic games, on which was inscribed the reward to be received from his native city, viz. a sum of money, public support, etc.; and this gave him a title to the same. The like custom also existed at Rome, although somewhat modified; for the Roman emperors scattered *tesserae* of a similar nature among the populace, on distinguished occasions.—But in these cases the *white* stone is wanting; and moreover, the *mystic* inscription which no one but the recipient could read. Vitringa thinks, upon the whole, that *both* of these sources are to be united on the present occasion. Let us see if something more satisfactory cannot be adduced.

(3) It is a frequent and favourite idea with the Apocalyptist, that Christians will be made *kings and priests* unto God; see Rev. 1: 6. 5: 10. 20: 6; comp. also Is. 61: 6. 1 Pet. 2: 5. In Ex. 28: 36 seq., the mitre or turban of the high-priest is described. On its front was to be put a plate of gold, inscribed קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה, *sacred to Jehovah.* The name Jehovah was the incommunicable and secret name, (see on Rev. 1: 4 above), which could be pronounced only by the high-priest, and was known, as the Jews say, only to him. Here then are all the materials for the explanation of the passage before us. Victors in the Christian struggle are to be made priests, yea exalted as it were to the dignity of *high-priests;* for this only would parallelize with the declaration, that they are to be made *kings.* Instead of a plate of gold in their mitre they are to have a *white stone,* ψῆφον λευκήν, i. e. a pellucid or resplendent diamond, (for ψῆφος is often used in the sense of a *precious* stone), on which should be an inscription equivalent to קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה, *sacred to Jehovah.* That λευκόν in the Apocalypse has such a meaning, i. e. resplendent or pellucid, as is here ascribed to it, is clear; see Comm. on λευκόν, 1: 14. Under the *new* order of things, i. e. since the Messiah's coming, the ancient inscription קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה is not, as formerly, to be engraved. The name Λόγος (John 1: 1. Rev. 19: 13) is to be written in its room, in order to denote that the victor is a follower of the Lamb. Perhaps the expression does not mean, that this identical word shall be the one which is to be employed, but it seems at least to mean, that some secret and sacred appellation equivalent to Λόγος shall be inscribed. Yet it seems safe to abide by λόγος, because, when applied to Christ, it has a secret or mystical sense. Thus all which has been said above respecting the secret name, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, has a direct bearing upon this passage. The *new* name is doubtless some name of the *Saviour.* Thus understood, all is perfectly plain and easy. *Christian* victors will wear, on the frontlets of their victory-mitres, the name of their great Leader, the Captain of their salvation. To him is ascribed an *incommunicable* and *secret* name, just as it is

given to Jehovah in Rev. 1: 4. This name of the *new order* of priests (i. e. of Christian priests in a *spiritual* sense) is of course, and should be, different from that on the mitre of the high-priests of old. Hence *ὄνομα καινόν*.

Eichhorn and others have considered the *ψῆφον* here merely as a ticket of introduction to the heavenly feast of the manna. But so considered, the writer would exhibit a plain *ὕστερον πρότερον* in the collocation of his ideas. The clause in such a case, ought to occupy the penult and not the ultimate place in the sentence. I understand the connection of the whole somewhat differently from Eichhorn. The Jewish high-priest was the only person who could go in where the manna was kept, i. e. into the most holy place. And even he could not taste of it. See now what Christ has done! *All* his faithful followers are not only made high-priests, and admitted where the manna is, but permitted to feed upon it. I may add, that the expression, *ὃ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ ὁ λαμβάνων*, seems evidently to refer to the well known fact, that no one of the Jews, the high-priest excepted, knew how to pronounce the word יְהֹוָה written upon his mitre. He only who wore the mitre, could pronounce that word. So he only who wears the Christian diadem can read the inscription of the *new name* upon it, and fully understand it.

Here then we have, instead of mystic, confused, unintelligible imagery, a most glowing description of the future reward of the faithful followers of Christ. Nor is it any objection to this explanation, that *two* distinct promises of reward are here made,—for such is the case in other instances; see Rev. 2: 26—28. 3: 5.

(18) And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: Thus saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes as a flame of fire, and his feet are like polished brass.

See the remarks on Rev. 1: 14, from which this passage is taken. But here there is a slight variation in the construction, (there *ὡς φλὸξ πυρός*, here *ὡς φλόγα πυρός*), on account of the Accusative case (*ὀφθαλμούς*) which precedes. *Αὐτοῦ* after *ὀφθαλμούς* is of somewhat doubtful authority; and the sense is better without it. The appellation *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*, very frequent in John, is employed only here in the Apocalypse. It was an early name of the Messiah; see Ps. 2: 7. Enoch 104c: 2.

(19) I know thy works, and love, and faith, and ministry, and thy patience, and thy recent labours more abundant than thy former ones.

Ἀγάπην should not be restricted here; for it appears to mean the love of God and man, and *διακονίαν* seems to be one of the proper fruits of it.—*Πίστιν* marks the confidence of the church at Thyatira in the

doctrines and promises of the Christian religion.—*Διακονίαν* designates active service in administering to the necessities and wants of others, particularly in the supply of food; so often in the New Testament, see Lexicon. Hence *διάκονος*, whose business it originally was to oversee the matter of distributing charities, Acts vi.—*Ὑπομονή* is patient endurance of the sorrows and troubles of life, and here it has reference specially to the troubles brought upon the church by persecution.

Τὰ ἔργα σου τὰ ἔσχατα κ. τ. λ., i. e. in the recent season of pressure and distress, the church had, even beyond their accustomed efforts, exerted themselves for the relief of others, and shown in all respects an increase of the practical Christian graces. The first *τὰ ἔργα* in the verse is *generic*. The virtues subsequently mentioned are particulars of the genus; and they are thus brought to view, because they were prominent. So at the close of the verse, *ἔργα* again has a kind of generic meaning, comprising the practical Christian graces.

(20) But I have somewhat against thee, that thou dost leave unrestrained thy wife Jezebel, who declareth herself [to be] a prophetess, and teacheth and leadeth astray my servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

Ἔχω κατά σου, see on 2: 4.—*Ἀφεῖς* 2 pers. sing. Pres., an unusual form, from the old contract *ἀφέω* = *ἀφίημι*. The literal meaning is, *to let alone, to suffer* or *leave unrestrained, to permit;* and so I have expressed it; in the version above.

Ἰεζάβελ, the name of Ahab's idolatrous wife, who had such an unhappy influence over him, is here plainly a symbolical name; but it is very expressive. The woman here denoted had, as it appears, an influence on some in the church, like to that of Jezebel on her husband.—The principal difficulty lies in calling this woman *τὴν γυναῖκά σου, thy wife.* Whose wife is meant? That of the *ἄγγελος*, understood merely as the bishop or pastor of the church; or that of the church at large, who are addressed through the medium of the bishop? If the bishop only were addressed, we should be obliged to suppose that his proper wife was here actually meant. But as it seems to be certain that the whole church are addressed (comp. v. 10 above and also v. 23), so *τὴν γυναῖκά σου* can mean only some woman in it, whose influence is great and also very corrupting. It would seem to be the intimate relation which the woman adverted to sustains to the church, that appears to give occasion for the appellation *τὴν γυναῖκά σου*. The church had power to *divorce* her, (if we may keep up the metaphor); and in view of her character and efforts they are reproved for not doing so.

The heresy taught in this case, appears to be the same as that referred to in 2: 6 and 2: 14, 15. The woman in question, whose proper name (probably from motives of delicacy) is withheld, was evidently one

who assumed the office of a public teacher (*καὶ διδάσκει*), and gave herself out (for so it is said) as an authorized *προφῆτις*. In the primitive age it was sometimes a matter of fact, that women taught and spoke in public; Acts 21: 9. 1 Cor. 11: 5. 14: 34. Rom. 16: 1. 1 Tim. 2: 11, 12. In 1 Cor. 11: 5, Paul merely regulates public speaking by females, when it takes place; in 1 Cor. 14: 34 and 1 Tim. 2: 11, 12, he forbids it, because it leads to indecorum and disorder. Under the ancient dispensation there were several prophetesses, such as Miriam, Deborah, Hulda, etc. The like under the new; Acts 21: 9. 1 Cor. 11: 5. Whether the Jezebel in this case did herself *practise* what she taught, is not, perhaps, expressly said; but it seems to be somewhat plainly intimated (v. 23); and indeed it is scarcely possible to suppose, that a woman would teach such things without practising them. Practice must precede such a thorough depravation of principle and abandonment of modesty and decency.

(21) And I have given her time that she might repent, and yet she will not repent of her fornication.

Ἔδωκα χρόνον of course shows that the error in question had been of some standing. Forbearance had already been exercised, and the time was now come in which other measures would be resorted to.—*Πορνείας αὐτῆς* may possibly mean the corrupt and abominable doctrines which she taught; but it seems likely, as above intimated, that doctrine and practice went together. In respect to *μετανοῆσαι ἐκ*, see remarks on the next verse.

(22) Behold, I cast her upon a bed, and those who have committed adultery with her into great affliction, unless they repent of her deeds.

Βάλλω εἰς κλίνην means to cast her upon a *sick-bed*, or (as we say) make her *bed-rid*. So *βάλλω* alone in Matt. 8: 6, 14. Matt. 9: 2, *ἐπὶ κλίνης βεβλημένον* means the same. So *ἐβέβλητο* in Luke 16: 20, denotes the languishing state of Lazarus. But here *βάλλω εἰς κλίνην* makes an antithesis to the *πορνεία* of the preceding verse, and forms a kind of mental *antanaclasis*. The harlot's bed and the bed of sickness and distress are placed in contrast, in the way of implication.

Θλῖψιν μεγάλην corresponds in sense with, and therefore explains, *βάλλω εἰς κλίνην*.—*Μετανοήσωσιν ἐκ*, a construction peculiar to this book; see in v. 21 above. In the Hebrew, נָחַם is sometimes followed bp מִן = *ἐκ*, see Ges. Lex., also in 9: 20, 21. 16: 11. Once with *ἀπό* in Acts 8: 22. In all other cases the verb is used absolutely and in an intransitive sense. In English we may say: He will repent this, or, He will repent *of* this. The latter idiom is exhibited in the Apocalypse. *Repent of her deeds* means, repent of such deeds as hers.

(23) And her children will I slay by deadly disease, and all the churches shall know that I am he who searcheth the reins and the heart; and I will render to you—to each one—according to your works.

Τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς ἀποκτενῶ, lit. children, or figuratively? The latter I should deem most probable here; for *τέκνα* seems to include all who had imbibed her sentiments. "Ye are of your *father*, the devil," said the Saviour to the Jews, i. e. ye are *children* of Satan. Still, if *τὰ τέκνα* is to be taken literally, and in distinction from *τοὺς μοιχεύοντας* (v. 22), then the threat will be like that in 2 K. 9: 7—9. Ex. 20: 5; and it involves the idea of severe punishment. Treason has, in almost all countries of the East, been followed with the extirpation of the whole family connected with the culprit. The allusion here would be to the severe punishment usually consequent on high misdemeanours.

Ἐν θανάτῳ, with pestilence or *deadly disease.* So in 6: 8. 18: 8. *Θάνατος* = the Heb. דֶּבֶר; see Septuagint *θάνατος* for דֶּבֶר in 2 Sam. 24: 13. So the Syriac and Rabbinic מוֹתָא, in the same sense. *Deadly disease* is the version which most exactly corresponds to *θάνατος* here.

Πᾶσαι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι . . . καρδίας. Here the speaker claims the prerogative of *omniscience;* comp. Ps. 7: 9. 1 Sam. 16: 7. 1 Chron. 28: 9. Ps. 139: 1. Jer. 11: 20. 17: 10. 20: 12. That is: 'I will make all the churches to understand, that I know all, even the most secret, acts of wickedness committed in the midst of them, however concealed from human view. All the thoughts of the heart are naked and open to my view.'

Ὑμῖν, to you collectively; *ἑκάστῳ, to each individual* particularly and personally. *Ἑκάστῳ* renders the expression more emphatic.

(24) But I say to you, the remainder who are in Thyatira, so many as hold not this doctrine, who have not known the depths (of Satan), as they say, on you I lay no other burden.

Τοῖς λοιποῖς κ. τ. λ., i. e. to all of the church not involved in the charges already made, I utter no words of commination, but only of exhortation and promise.—*Οὐκ ἔχουσι, do not hold*, i. e. possess, entertain, retain.

Βάθεα, depths, i. e. mysteries, or deep and therefore secret things which can be understood only by *μύσται*; with evident allusion to the common views of the heathen respecting their *mysteries*, e. g. the mysteries of Eleusis, etc. The heretics here stigmatized undoubtedly pretended to a deeper, i. e. more profound, knowledge of Christianity than others; and by virtue of such knowledge they had attained, as they also pretended, to a conviction, that the eating of idol-sacrifices and the gratification of their lusts were *ἀδιάφορα*, q. d. matters of indifference in a spiritual respect—for what power, they probably inquired, could the

body have over the immortal *mind?* The common English version—"the depths of Satan, as they say"—would represent the heretics in question as themselves giving such an appellation to their own fancied mysteries. Evidently they would not have so named them, that is, they would not have introduced the name of *Satan* in connection with them; for this would at once both condemn them and render them odious in the eyes of others. *Τοῦ Σατανᾶ*, therefore, is evidently a characterizing expression thrown in by the speaker, and is to be read and considered as I have marked it, viz. in the way of parenthesis. So Vitringa; and so Ewald, who translates: "Mysteria, quae dicunt, revera Satanae."

This mention of pretended *βάθεα* in the doctrines of these heretics reminds us forcibly of Gnostic *μυστήρια*, the leaven of which sect would seem to have already begun its fermentation. Tertullian (at the close of the second century) thus characterizes some of that sect: Si bonâ fide quaeras, concreto vultu, suspenso supercilio: ALTUM EST, aiunt. Adv. Val. c. 1. Irenaeus also says of them: Qui profunda Bythi adinvenisse se dicant; and again: Profunda Dei adinvenisse se dicentes; Cont. Haer. II. 38, 39 (edit. Massuet, II. 22).

If, instead of referring *ὡς λέγουσι* to the heretics, we refer it to the name given to their mysteries by the adverse party, then there would be no need of construing the passage as I have done above. The sentiment would then run thus: 'Who have not known the depths of Satan, as men are accustomed to name them.' It is very probable, that the zealous Christians here (see v. 19) would bestow on the pretended mysteries such an appellation. But the change of person from *ὑμῖν* in the beginning of the verse, to the third pers. plur. here, is against this solution.

Ἄλλο βάρος, any other burden; comp. Matt. 20: 12, and כֹּבֶד in Is. 21: 15. Eichhorn understands *βάρος* figuratively of *precept*, and compares Matt. 11: 30. 23: 4. But in the passage before us the speaker has not been uttering *precepts;* and what could *ἄλλο* mean, on such a ground as Eichhorn's? On the other hand; *commination* he has uttered. The difficulties arising naturally from the then existing state of things, and which would ensue upon the expurgation of the church, were all which the Lord Jesus thought proper to burden the church of Thyatira with, at the time when he thus addressed them. This appears to be the plain and simple meaning of the passage.

(25) Nevertheless, hold fast that which ye have, until I shall come.

While he imposes no *penalty* upon the faithful party, he still exhorts them to remain firm and unwavering in their present love, and faith, and good works. Under temptations such as assailed them, they had special need of caution in this respect.

Ἄχρις οὗ ἂν ἥξω, i. e. shall come to vindicate the faithful, and punish transgressors. The time was not far distant when they might expect this. But the use of Aor. I. Subj. here, (*ἥξω*), with *ἄν*, intimates that the time of coming is left undetermined; it may be sooner or later. The design of the speaker is to leave it undefined, in order to promote watchfulness.

(26) And as to him who overcometh, and watchfully performeth until the end the works which I require—to him will I give authority over the nations.

Ὁ νικῶν and *ὁ τηρῶν* are plainly the Nominative *absolute*, so common in the Old Testament and not unfrequent in the New; see Heb. Gramm. § 415—417. N. Test. Gramm. § 97. 2.—*Ἄχρι τέλους* used *adverbially*, and so without the article. The end of trial or probation, or of life, is here meant; for the promise is to each individual who may be obedient. —*Τηρῶν*, like the Hebrew שָׁמַר, *keep*, *observe*, i. e. watchfully perform, obey.—*Ἔργα μου* means, such works as I have prescribed or commanded; comp. the relations expressed by the Genitive, N. Test. Gramm. § 99. Here *τὰ ἔργα μου* is tacitly opposed to *τὰ ἔργα Ἰεζάβελ*.—*Ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν*, i. e. I will make him *king;* comp. 1: 6 and the texts there cited. Meaning: 'I will give him an exalted station, with abundance and honour like those of kings;' comp. 1 Cor. 4: 7, 8.

(27) And he shall rule them with an iron sceptre, as potter's vessels shall he dash them in pieces; as I have received of my Father.

The allusion here is to Ps. 2: 9, with a slight change of the verbs (from second pers. to the third) in order to adapt them to the present purpose of the speaker. *To rule with a rod or sceptre of iron*, is to exercise a sovereign and irresistible sway. In other words, such dominion cannot be successfully opposed or rendered null.—*To dash in pieces as potter's vessels*, implies the complete subjugation and destruction of all who oppose.—But the reading *συντρίβεται* here (Praes.) does not seem to couple well with *ποιμανεῖ* (Fut.). *Συντριβήσεται*, to which Griesbach attaches a good degree of probability, seems more congruous. If this be not admitted, then I should prefer to change the accent over *ποιμανεῖ* and write *ποιμάνει*, i. e. Present tense, which would make both parts of the sentence consentaneous. As to the Present being used for the future, no serious difficulty surely can be urged here; see N. Test. Gramm. § 136. 1. *c*, and Vol. I. p. 239, *b*. The imagery of a potter's vessel struck by an iron sceptre, is a very vivid representation of the dangerous and perishable condition of the enemies of the church.

Ὡς κἀγὼ . . . πατρός μου, i. e. *ὡς κἀγὼ εἴληφα ἐξουσίαν* [from v. 26] *ποιμάνειν καὶ συντρίβεσθαι παρὰ τοῦ πατρός μου*, the ellipsis being easily filled up from the preceding context. The meaning is, that his disciples

shall reign with him, or be partners in his kingdom; see the passages quoted under Rev. 1: 6, particularly Luke 22: 29, 30. 2 Tim. 2: 12. Rev. 3: 21.—On the phrase εἴληφα κ. τ. λ., see the quotations under Rev. 1: 1, which exhibit the dependence of the Mediator, as such, upon God the Father.

(28) And I will give to him the morning star.

In chap. 1: 14—16, the Saviour is presented as all resplendent and glorious, 'shining like the sun in his strength.' In 2 Sam. 21: 17, David is called *the light of Israel*. In Dan. 12: 3, the wise, it is said, will "shine as the brightness of the firmament [the sun], . . . and as the stars forever and ever." In Dan. 8: 10, those are called *the host of heaven and the stars*, who perform service in the temple of God, and who will be cast down by Antiochus. The king of Babylon is compared to the *morning star*, on account of splendour, in Is. 14: 12. In Num. 24: 17, Balaam prophecies that *a Star shall arise out of Jacob*, i. e. the Messiah. Now as Jesus had just said, that he would give his faithful followers like dominion with his own, so here a splendour or glory like his own (as θεάνθρωπος or Mediator), he declares shall be imparted to them. *I will give him the morning star*, then, means: I will clothe him with radiance like that of the morning star, i. e. I will make him all bright and glorious. Observe that the writer does not say: δώσω αὐτῷ, etc., as merely equivalent to θήσω αὐτόν, etc., i. e. I will make him a morning star, but his meaning is, *I will give him the radiance of the morning star*. Comp. Rev. 12: 1, the woman *clothed with the sun;* also Ps. 104: 2, "*Who coverest thyself with light*, as with a garment." See also Rev. 22: 16, where Christ himself is called the *morning star*, i. e. all splendid and glorious. Daubuz (Comm. in loc.) says the meaning is: 'I will make him partaker of the *first* resurrection (Rev. 20: 6), which is the morning star to the second.'

CHAPTER III.

(1) And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: Thus saith he who hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars. I know thy works; that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

Ὁ ἔχων τὰ ἑπτὰ πνεύματα τοῦ θεοῦ. Are these attributes merely of himself, i. e. is he represented here as a mere *Spiritus septiformis?* Or as having the seven presence angels under his control, or at his disposal—having them as his attendants and the ministers of his will? Beyond all reasonable doubt the latter; for, on the other ground, how are we to interpret the next clause, [ἔχων] τοὺς ἑπτὰ ἀστέρας? These surely are not *attributes* of the Saviour, but symbols of the seven ἄγγε-

λοι of the churches, comp. 1: 20. As to *the seven angels before the throne of God*, see under 1: 4, and comp. here Rev. 8: 2, and 4: 5. In this last passage, the *seven lamps* before the throne of God, are said to be the seven spirits of God; or, reversing the order of the declaration for the sake of perspicuity, the seven spirits of God are seven burning, i. e. shining or resplendent lights; for the expression means *all radiant like the flame of lamps*. That such is the meaning, seems plain from a comparison of other like passages; e. g. in Ezek. 1: 13, the living creatures, who support the throne of God and convey it instantaneously to any part of the universe, are said to be *like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps*. So in Is. 6: 1, the Seraphim (שְׂרָפִים from שָׂרַף, *exurere, comburere*), i. e. *the bright* or *shining ones, ardentes, lucentes*, surround the throne of God. In Zech. 3: 9. 4: 10 and Rev. 5: 6, another like symbol is employed, viz. that of *seven eyes* running to and fro through the whole earth; the mode of conception here being that which forms an image of bright, sparkling, or resplendent eyes (see Rev. 2: 18), which throw radiance on every part of the universe and make all things plain and conspicuous. But here, the seven eyes are indicative of properties belonging to him who possesses them; and in this respect they differ from the preceding passages which refer to angels; comp. Rev. 2: 18. The meaning in all the preceding passages which respect angels, is substantially the same, viz., that angels of the highest rank, those glorious beings who stand immediately before the throne of God, are in attendance on the divine Majesty, or (as here) on the Saviour, and are "swift to do his will." *Supreme power* in him whose servants they are, is thus significantly designated.—As to ἔχων, there can be no doubt that the more usual signification is given to it by this interpretation. At any rate the next clause shows, that the *possession* here does not relate to the possession of *attributes* but to a *power of disposal*. Thus, as Eichhorn, Heinrichs, and Ewald, all testify, the Apocalyptist attributes to the Saviour the same prerogatives as he does to the supreme Godhead. In Enoch 48 *b*: 2, 3, the Messiah is represented as having *three* spirits dwelling in him. Comp. also 60: 13, ib.

Τοὺς ἑπτὰ ἀστέρας, see on 1: 16.—Ὅτι κ. τ. λ., before ὅτι the verb οἶδα is of course implied.—Ὄνομα, here, *a name* and nothing more, as the sequel shows.—Ὅτι ζῇς, we should express the clause in English thus: 'That thou hast a name *to live*.' So the Greek might have been; but nothing is more common than ὅτι after verbs of *knowing, saying, reporting*, etc.—Ζῇς Indicative Praes. and always of this peculiar form, in the New Testament; see Lexicon. The sense here is of course a *spiritual* one.—Νεκρός, *dead* spiritually; a common idiom, to designate those who are cold and stupid with respect to spiritual things, and specially those who are in an unregenerate state, Eph. 2: 1,

5. Col. 2: 13. Rom. 6: 13. Matt. 8: 22. The word *νεκρός* is here used in a *modified* sense; for the speaker does not mean to deny that there are some Christians at Sardis. What he means to say is, that they are generally in a cold and lifeless state.

(2) Be watchful, and strengthen what remains and is ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Γρηγορῶν, *watchful* or *wakeful*, in opposition to the drowsy condition of the church.—*Στήρισον*, *strengthen* or confirm, viz. that which is now apparently weak and inefficient, i. e. rouse up into active and living energy.—*Τὰ λοιπά*, lit. *remaining things*, i. e. the Christian graces or virtues which now seem ready to expire.

Γάρ—i. e. do so, *for* I have not found, etc.; or, I say this, *for* or *because*, etc.—*Πεπληρωμένα*, *complete*, lit. *full*, i. e. in the sense of being complete in all respects. In other words: Thy works are not such, in the sight of God, as comport with the high demands of Christian faith. —*Ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ* admonishes them, that "the Lord seeth not as man seeth;" he looks on the heart and forms a true judgment, not being misled, as men are, by appearances and professions.—*Μου*, see remarks on *μου* used in the same connection, in 2: 7.

(3) Remember, therefore, how thou hast learned and heard, and keep [those things] in mind, and repent. If now thou shouldest not be watchful, I will come as a thief, and thou shalt not know in what hour I will come upon thee.

Πῶς may signify *in what manner*, *how*, in which case it probably designates something peculiar as to the manner in which the church at Sardis had been taught the gospel. Such would be the ordinary signification of the word. But it might, perhaps, be construed adverbially here as an *intensive;* e. g. Luke 12: 50, *πῶς συνέχομαι*, *how greatly am I distressed!* John 11: 36, *πῶς ἐφίλει αὐτόν*, *how much he loved him.* So here: Remember how much thou hast learned and heard. But I apprehend that *πῶς* is used as a simple intensive only with verbs which imply *feeling.* The other mode of exegesis comes to the same sense substantially, although the idea conveyed is indefinite and generic, i. e. the reader is not expressly informed of the manner in which they had been taught, but the implication is, that it was unusually good.

Εἴληφας (from *λαμβάνω*) is sometimes employed for *receiving* in the way of a learner, e. g. Diod. Sic. II. 29; and in 1 Cor. 11: 23. 15: 3 al., the same meaning is given to *παραλαμβάνω*. So לֶקַח in Hebrew; also לֶקַח, *doctrina*, *scientia*, quasi *λῆψις*. So the converse of *λαμβάνω*, viz. *δίδωμι*, often means to *impart instruction.*—*Ἤκουσας* refers to the *oral* instruction which had been imparted, and which they had heard.

Τήρει, *keep in mind*, (see on *τηροῦντες* 1: 3), i. e. keep in mind what

thou hast heard and been taught.—*Μετανόησον, repent* of your present cold and lifeless state.—*Οὖν* may be rendered here as a *continuative*. It marks additional matter, dependent on, or connected with, what goes before; so that *ἐαν οὖν* must be rendered, *if moreover, if now.*—*Ὡς κλέπτης* designates the idea of a sudden and unexpected coming, like that of a thief in the dead of night. In Joel 2: 9 it characterizes the sudden invasion of the locusts. Comp. Matt. 24: 43. Luke 12: 39, 40. 1 Thess. 5: 4. 2 Pet. 3: 10. Rev. 16: 15. With us the image in itself would seem to be of a forbidding nature, because *κλέπτης* is an odious personage. The frequency of this comparison in the Scriptures, however, shows how much the taste is modified by usage. It also shows, what is elsewhere generally the case, that *comparisons* are to be extended, for the most part, only to one single leading point or particular. If we should extend the comparison, in the present case, beyond the simple point of *sudden and unexpected coming*, it would become odious and unjust. It should however be noted, that it is only when *punishment* is threatened, that such a coming is designated by the sacred writers. The comparison as to the single point intended, is undoubtedly a strong and forcible one; and this is illustrated by the sequel of the passage before us: *καὶ οὐ μὴ γνῶς κ. τ. λ.* The taste which now prevails in the western world would doubtless have led to the selection of a different object for comparison, on an occasion like the present; but such a choice was sanctioned by Hebrew usage, and was in accordance with the *usus loquendi* of the day; which is a sufficient justification of the Apocalyptist. On *οὐ μὴ γνῶς* (Aor. II. Subj.), see Gramm. § 148. 4. As to *ποίαν ὥραν*, Accusative of *time when*, see Vol. I. p. 249.

(4) But still, thou hast a few names in Sardis, who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.

Ἔχεις, thou possessest, i. e. there are among you.—*Ὀνόματα* here for *persons, individuals;* comp. Acts 1: 15. Rev. 11: 13, for the like usage. In Hebrew שֵׁם, in cases almost without number, is used as a kind of periphrasis for God or Jehovah, sometimes absolutely, and sometimes followed by the word *God* or *Jehovah;* e. g. those who love thy name, Ps. 5: 11, 12. My name is in him, Ex. 23: 21. My name shall be there [in the temple], 1 K. 8: 29. So, to call on the name of the Lord; to praise the name of the Lord; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; the name of the Lord is a strong tower, etc. In the New Testament this idiom abounds even still more; see Rob. Lex. *ὄνομα*, d. Thus, to believe in his name; trust in his name; do this or that for his name's sake; be baptized into his name, or into the name of the Father, etc.; to assemble in his name; suffer for his name, etc. Even without a suffix pronoun, or a Gen. following, שֵׁם is used for *God*, in Lev. 24: 11, 16,

comp. Deut. 28: 58. Ὀνόματα and שֵׁבֶט (in the plural) appear to be employed in such a sense, only when some *enumeration* is supposed to take place; comp. Num. 1: 2, 18, 20. 3: 40, 43. 26: 53, and also Acts 1: 15. Rev. 11: 13. So here, the adjective ὀλίγα implies some kind of enumeration, in order to ascertain the fact which it asserts.

Ἃ οὐκ ἐμόλυναν . . . αὐτῶν. Clean white garments are very natural emblems of innocence, and have been extensively spoken of as such among many nations. Hence to be clothed with polluted garments, i. e. garments soiled, stained, etc., is an emblem of a character which is soiled or polluted, see Zech. 3: 3 seq.

Καὶ περιπατήσουσι . . . ἐν λευκοῖς, i. e. inasmuch as they have remained pure and uncontaminated, they shall enjoy the reward of so doing, by a continued and permanent state of purity and glory with the Redeemer in the world to come. The source of the metaphorical language ἐν λευκοῖς, may be easily explained. The priests were required to clothe themselves in white linen, Lev. 16: 4. Ex. 28: 39, 42. Lev. 6: 10. In like manner the saints in the world of glory are to be clad, Rev. 6: 11. 7: 9. 19: 8, where the βύσσινον is said to be τὰ δικαιώματα τῶν ἁγίων, i. e. to be an emblem of δικαιώματα. Or it may be illustrated in another way. In Heb. חָרַר means *to be white*; חוֹר *white linen*; חוֹרִים *ingenui, nobiles*, so called because they wore vestments of this material. I am aware that Gesenius refers this to the Arabic حَرَّ, *ingenuus fuit*; but as the Hebrew verb חָרַר has no such sense, and the other derivation (from חָרַר) is easy and obvious, it seems to me preferable. As the first method of explaining ἐν λευκοῖς would represent the faithful as being *priests to God*, so the second designates them as *princes* or *kings*. Both ideas are common to the Apocalypse, and the reader may choose which he pleases. I give the preference to the former, because the becoming *priests* seems to be a favourite trope with the writer; comp. 2: 17, and texts cited under 1: 6. Comp. also Acts 1: 10. Matt. 28: 3. Acts 10: 30. Mark 16: 5. Luke 24: 4, for illustration of the general nature of the imagery. Contemporary writers employ the like imagery abundantly and for similar purposes; Enoch 89: 41, 42, 45, 46. That white and splendid vestments are laid up in heaven for the faithful, is a common idea among writers of this description, and among the Rabbins; see 4 Ezra 2: 39, 44, 45. Enoch 61: 18. Ascens. Is. 3: 25. 4: 16. 8: 26. 9: 9, 25. Zohar (Amst.) I. 66. II. 210. Eisenm. Jud. II. p. 310. Schöttg. Hor. Heb. in loc.

Ἄξιοί εἰσιν, i. e. by a pure and unspotted life, they have manifested a fitness for such a reward.—*To walk with the Redeemer* means here to be associated with him in the world to come, and to participate in his glory. Perhaps there is an allusion to Zech. 3: 7, "I will give thee מַהֲלְכִים

(*περιπατοῦντες*) among those who stand here," i. e. the guardian angels of the temple shall accompany thee and protect thee.

(5) He that overcometh—the same shall be clothed in white vestments; and I will not blot out his name from the book of life, and I will acknowledge his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Ὁ νικῶν, Nom. abs., see Gramm. § 97. 2. The insertion of *οὗτος* here before the verb, is designed to give emphasis; Gramm. § 123. 1.

Οὐ μὴ ἐξαλείψω . . . τῆς ζωῆς, *I will not blot out*, i. e. I will suffer to remain or cause to be retained. The form of expression is a *litotes*, i. e. an affirmative sense attached to a negative form of expression.—*Βίβλος ζωῆς* is a frequent idea in both the Old and New Testament. Heaven is first conceived of as a *city;* then those admitted to dwell there are *citizens;* their names of course are conceived of as inscribed in the city-register. Names thus inscribed in cities on earth, are blotted out when life ceases, or when crime is committed and forfeiture of privilege ensues. *Not to be blotted out* of course implies, therefore, continued life and privilege. See and comp. Ex. 32: 32. Is. 4: 3. Ps. 56: 8. Dan. 12: 1. Comp. also Rev. 13: 8. 17: 8. 20: 12. 21: 27. Enoch 105: 21. Further developments respecting a book in the heavenly archives in which the names and all actions of men are recorded, will be found in Rev. 20: 12. Dan. 7: 10. The book of Enoch is filled with such views; see 47: 3. 88: 104—118. 89: 21, 25, 30—33. 96: 16. 99: 4. 103: 1, 2. 105: 16, 17, 23. So also 4 Ezra 6: 20. Ascens. Is. 9: 22.

Ὁμολογήσω τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, *I will openly* or *publicly declare* or *acknowledge his* NAME, in reference to the name enrolled in the book of life, or, in a sense like that which *ὄνομα* has in numberless cases, viz. *him*, i. e. this person. See on v. 4 above.—*Ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀγγέλων αὐτοῦ*, *before his angels.* The idea is that God in heaven is surrounded (and so the Scriptures represent him) with numberless hosts of angels. In presence of these, as well as of the supreme Majesty, the names of believers will be acknowledged. Comp. Rev. 1: 4, and the remarks there made; also Mark 8: 38. Luke 9: 26. 12: 8. 1 Tim. 5: 21. But perhaps (probably as it seems to me) only the *presence-angels* are meant here, as in Rev. 1: 4, comp. Rev. 8: 2.

(7) And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: Thus saith he who is holy and true; who hath the key of David; who openeth and no one shutteth, and shutteth and no one openeth.

Ὁ ἅγιος = קָדוֹשׁ, a title of the Godhead, Hosea 11: 9. Hab. 3: 3, and קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל passim.—*Ὁ ἀληθινός* is a different way of expressing the same idea which *μάρτυς πιστός* expresses in 1: 5, i. e. he who will perform all his promises or keep his word.

Τὴν κλεῖν τοῦ Δαυΐδ. In Rev. 5: 5 the Messiah is called *ἡ ῥίζα Δαυΐδ*, i. e. *a root-sprout* or *root-shoot* of David; and in Rev. 22: 16, *ἡ ῥίζα καὶ τὸ γένος Δαυΐδ, the root-shoot and offspring* of David, i. e. the son of David; the expression being poetical. In Luke 1: 32 the angel Gabriel announces to Mary, that 'the Lord God will give to the child about to be born, the *throne* of David his father.' I take the sense to be the same here; although the mode of expression, *key of David*, is evidently borrowed from Is. 22: 22, where, in the same words which are here employed, dominion over the house of Judah, like to that of David, is promised to Eliakim the son of Hilkiah. The metaphor of the *key* stands there connected with the *house* of David, which makes the meaning obvious. Access to, and control over, the house of David, i. e. the regal house or palace, is plainly designated by the *key;* in other words, *regal dominion* is the meaning. Here, the word *house* is omitted, which makes the meaning less obvious. The words which follow: *ὁ ἀνοίγων . . . ἀνοίγει* designate, of course, complete and entire control, i. e. supreme dominion. One who had this power over a house, would have the supreme control of it. So here; the Messiah, who is *ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ὁ ἀληθινός*, has power to perform all his promises, for his control is supreme and entire. So in 1: 18, *ἔχω τὰς κλεῖς τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τοῦ ᾅδου*, i. e. I have supreme control over the regions of death, or the world of the dead.—*Κλεῖν* (from *κλείς*) makes an anomalous contraction (for *κλείδα*) in the Accusative singular; so in the plural *κλεῖς* for *κλεῖδας*; see Buttm. § 58.

(8) I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, which no man can shut; because thou hast some little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

Open door has an evident reference to the phraseology of the preceding verse, i. e. to the keys, on which depend the opening and the shutting. As it plainly means the enjoyment of some privilege, (for an *open door* must mean ready and easy access to any place), in its present connection, it must of course signify the easy and abundant attainment of privileges and blessings. If the question be asked: What are these blessings? The answer seems to be plainly given in the 9th and 10th verses, viz., (1) Their Jewish persecutors will be made to humble themselves, and to confess the Saviour's protecting power. (2) The church at Philadelphia shall but lightly experience the trials which are coming upon the world around them. To sum up all here promised in one sentence: 'I will humble thy persecutors, and mitigate for thee trials to which the churches in general are exposed.'

Perhaps the tropical language of *an open door* might be explained with more facility by reversing the order in which we conceive of the

blessings that are to be bestowed. We have, in the preceding view, regarded the matter in the light of 'easy and free access to *positive* blessings;' but would not the context rather lead us to interpret *open door* as having respect to a liberation from a state of bondage or danger? This church is to be kept from the trials which are to overtake others. A ready way of escape will be proffered to them, i. e. an open door is set before them. In substance, this amounts to the same as the preceding method of interpretation; but we make a somewhat different application of the tropical language.

Ewald interprets it of a promise to *multiply converts* to the church, appealing to Acts 14: 27. 1 Cor. 16: 9. 2 Cor. 2: 12. Col. 4: 3. No doubt, *open door* might designate an enlarged power of making converts; but the context here has told us what is meant, so that we are not at liberty to devise another meaning, however possible or even probable. On the other hand, Eichhorn and Heinrichs interpret *open door* of easy access to the heavenly temple or palace, at all times. In itself this meaning is not objectionable; but the context, as has been remarked, points us to a different interpretation. Vitringa gives it a little different turn from Ewald: 'I will give thee free access to preachers and all the means of grace, and will increase thee, although thou art now small or few in number;' (for so he construes *ὅτι μικρὰν ἔχεις δύναμιν*). This is a meaning not improbable in itself; but the context forbids it here. Vs. 9, 10, are plainly epexegetical of *θύραν ἀνεῳγμένην*.

As to *ὅτι μικρὰν ἔχεις δύναμιν*, the question seems to be, whether it applies to the small numbers of the church, or to the spiritual energy and life which they possess. Most of the leading expositors refer it to the *fewness of numbers*, making *δύναμιν* equivalent to *number* or *quantity*. So the preceding interpreters; and so in Rob. Lex. and others. That *δύναμις* may mean *abundance* (comp. חַיִל), is plain from Rev. 18: 3; but in this passage such a tropical meaning is not forced upon the word by the context. No other example of the same kind occurs in the N. Testament; and this alone seems hardly adequate to justify the interpretation which we are examining. The phrase itself—*a small abundance*—proffers something that seems incongruous and rather forbidding. Hence I must side with our English version: "Thou hast a little strength," by which, as I presume, the translators meant to designate the spiritual condition of the church at Philadelphia. The objection to this may be comprised in the question: How can a *little* strength be a reason for bestowing the blessings upon them, which are promised in the sequel? Plainly not a good reason, I admit, in case we are to regard the expression as a positive declaration amounting to this: 'Thou hast but a little strength;' for this would be matter of accusation, instead of promise. But I do not interpret the phrase in this way.

I regard it as a *λιτότης*, i. e. a softened mode of expression in a kind of negative form, which implies much more than the words strictly taken would seem to import. This is a favourite figure or mode of expression in these seven epistles; comp. 2: 2, 3, 13, 24. 3: 5, 12, 16, and the last clause of the verse before us. What has he said to the church at Sardis? *Νεκρὸς εἶ*, i. e. thou art destitute of due spiritual life or activity. As the opposite of this, what says he in the present case? *Μικρὰν ἔχεις δύναμιν*, i. e. thou hast some energy. But why does he not speak in the *positive* form, and say *μεγάλην*? Because the church were probably not entitled to commendation so high. They were not in the highest state of action; but they had steadfastly adhered to their Christian profession, and they had never become recusants, notwithstanding all their trials. Hence the promises which are made to them in the sequel.

That the speaker means to say something in the way of commendation, in the clause before us, I cannot well doubt; for this the tenor of the discourse, and the two succeeding clauses that are annexed to *μικρὰν ἔχεις δύναμιν*, indicate. If we suppose a *λιτότης* in the case before us, then we have this sentiment: 'Thou hast some portion of Christian vigour, hast kept my word,' etc. Much less congruous does the other mode of interpretation appear to me; although I deny not its possibility.

Ἐτήρησας in the sense of שָׁמַר, *obeyed, watchfully observed.*—*Λόγον* means *whatever he has declared*, i. e. all his prescriptions or commands. —*Οὐκ ἠρνήσω, thou hast not denied.* When the heathen or Jews brought Christians before the civil magistrates, and accused them of practising a *religio non licita*, they were required to renounce and denounce the name of Christ. The church of Philadelphia had refused to do this. They had met persecution and danger with steadfastness and with constancy.—*Ὄνομα* may be taken here as above, i. e. *τὸ ὄνομά μου* may be regarded as = *μέ*. A good reason, however, for a somewhat different explanation is, that *ὄνομα* is employed here because Christians were called upon, in persecution, to renounce their *name* as Christians, as well as their faith in Christ. This name the church at Philadelphia had not renounced.

(9) Behold, I will cause those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews (and yet are not), but speak falsely—behold I will make them come and do homage before thy feet, and know that I have loved thee.

Δίδωμι = נָתַן, *faciam, ponam, I will cause*, or I will so arrange this matter. After *δίδωμι* we must mentally supply *αὐτούς*, which makes its appearance below after *ποιήσω*.—*Ἐκ* expresses (with *αὐτούς* implied) a *partitive* sense, or rather it indicates the source whence *αὐτούς* flows, viz., the synagogue of Satan. Such a meaning of *ἐκ* is common in the New Testament; see Rob. Lex. *ἐκ* h. Comp. also Ges. Heb. Lex. מִן,

No. 1.—*Συναγωγῆς κ. τ. λ.*, see on 2: 9, where the same expression occurs. The speaker means to say, that however much they may boast of their zeal or their name, they are not *Jews* in the true and noble sense of that word. Comp. John 8: 33, 39, 40. *Τῶν λεγόντων*, Genitive plural, concord *ad sensum* with the noun of multitude *συναγωγῆς*.

Ἰδοὺ ποιήσω αὐτούς resumes the sentence which had been suspended by intermediate matter, and exchanges the *δίδωμι* of the first clause for the more explicit verb *ποιήσω*.—*Ἵνα ἥξωσι κ. τ. λ.*, equivalent to the Infinitive modes *ἥκειν* and *προσκυνεῖν*, N. Test. Gramm. § 162. 3. Note 2. *Προσκυνέω* has the generic sense of *falling prostrate* or *doing homage;* and this homage may be either to God or man. In the former case, it is *spiritual worship*, in the latter, it is *civil homage*. The lexicons under שָׁחָה and *προσκυνέω* will supply examples of both. The idea of *worship* here, in the *spiritual* sense, is out of question. Prostration of enemies as merely humbled and subdued, in this case, is all that can be meant. Ewald supposes that the *conversion* of these enemies is implied. Possibly it is; but this meaning is not a necessary one. Enough for the purposes of the speaker, that the enemies of the church at Philadelphia are to be humbled and abased before his faithful servants. It might be hoped, indeed, that such a frame of mind would lead them on still further to recognize the power of the Christian religion. Comp. Is. 60: 14. 49: 23.

Καὶ γνῶσιν . . . σε = *γνῶναι* Inf., as above in the case of *προσκυνεῖν*. The meaning is, that the elevation of the Christian cause and the humiliation of its enemies shall be such, that those enemies will be constrained to acknowledge the special power, protection, and kind regard of the great Head of the church toward Christians.

(10) Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which is coming on all the world, to try those who dwell on the earth.

Τὸν λόγον τῆς ὑπομονῆς μου, i. e. my command to exercise patience under trials; *ὑπομονῆς μου* appears to mean, *the patience which I require*. Eichhorn and Heinrichs construe these words as the *Gen. of similitude*, i. e. patience such as I have exhibited; but the sense above given better accords with *ἐτήρησάς μου τὸν λόγον* in v. 8.

Καί σε τηρήσω, I will keep in another sense, i. e. *preserve;* so that there is here an *antanaclasis* with the preceding *ἐτήρησας*.—*Ὥρας* is to be taken in the generic sense, viz. *season, time, period*.—*Πειρασμοῦ* here in the sense of *temptation*, i. e. temptation (in this case) to recant the Christian profession, because of the sufferings of which it was the occasion in times of persecution.

Μελλούσης ἔρχεσθαι, is about to come, or which is speedily coming;

for so *μέλλω* usually signifies, being employed to designate the proximate future.—*Οἰκουμένην ὅλης, the whole world;* comp. *πάσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην* in Luke 2: 1, where possibly it means *Judea*, but probably the whole Roman empire. At any rate, the phrase is often used indefinitely for a wide extent of country; and so it may designate the whole Roman empire. Here the most probable meaning is the same, or at least the whole region of the Roman Asia Minor, or the whole country around the region of Philadelphia. So the כָּל־הָאָרֶץ or תֵּבֵל of the Hebrews.—*Πειράσαι*, Infinitive, defines, or expresses the purpose or end to be accomplished. N. Test. Gramm. § 162. 4.—*Κατοικοῦντας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*, i. e. the temptation or trial coming upon the inhabitants of the land; this phrase being added for the sake of more ample specification. *Γῆς* is most evidently here synonymous with *οἰκουμένης ὅλης*, and *κατοικοῦντας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς* is a common Hebraistic idiom for designating the *inhabitants* of a country.

Meaning: 'I will exempt you from the severe trials of persecution which will be experienced by all the countries around you, or I will mitigate these trials.' This shows, that an active and wide-spread persecution was then either going on or about to go on, and was still to be continued, when this book was written. Of course this brings up the inquiry, whether the Apocalypse must not have been written during Nero's life; for when he died the persecution ceased immediately, as all agree.

(11) I am coming quickly; hold fast what thou hast, that no one may take away thy crown.

Κράτει ὃ ἔχεις, keep steadfast in thy firm and hitherto unwavering faith. Do this *ἵνα μηδεὶς λάβῃ τὸν στέφανόν σου*, in order that, or so that, none shall deprive you of your proffered reward. Christians were encouraged with the promise of their *being made kings and priests to God.* In either case a *mitre* or *crown*, (see the splendid image in 2: 17), would belong to them.—*Μηδεὶς λάβῃ* expresses the same sense as the passive voice *may not be taken away*, = *μὴ ἀναιρεθῇ*, for *μηδείς* is the indef. Nom.—*Λάβῃ, take away;* so Matt. 5: 40. Rev. 6: 4. So the Hebrew לָקַח; see both words in the lexicons. The idea is, that *perseverance* is essential to the final reward of Christians.

(12) He who overcometh—I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall no more go out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, of the new Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and my new name.

Ποιήσω αὐτὸν στύλον Ewald compares with Is. 22: 23 for illustration, this being the sequel of the passage referred to in v. 7 above; see commentary on that verse. There the prophet Isaiah speaks of Elia-

kim, as about to become "a nail in a sure place, and also a glorious throne;" see a kindred expression in Ezra 9: 8, 9. To me it seems more natural and easy to adopt the familiar view of Paul and Peter (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17. 6: 19. 2 Cor. 6: 16. 1 Pet. 2: 5), which represents Christians as parts of a great temple or spiritual building, of which Christ is the chief corner stone. If the metaphor is carried through with consistency, such a temple must of course be supposed to have *στύλοι, pillars.* These are a conspicuous, ornamental, and highly useful part of the temple. What pillars are then to a temple literally considered, the like will such Christians as those in Philadelphia be, in the spiritual temple built by the Saviour. The principal idea is plain, and very striking. The promise is *special*, on the ground that the virtues in question are special. Comp. Gal. 2: 9, where *στύλοι* has a kindred sense. That the idea of *steadfastness* lies at the basis of all, is plain from the context and from the nature of the case.

Καὶ ἔξω . . . ἔτι is to be referred, not to the *pillar*, (for this image is *completed* with the preceding clause), but to the *man, αὐτόν*, i. e. to him who overcometh. *He shall never more go out*, i. e. never depart from, or be removed from, the temple in which he is stationed. He shall there occupy a steadfast and a constant place. See the like sentiment in John 6: 37. 10: 28, 29. 1 John 2: 19.

Καὶ γράψω ἐπ' αὐτόν, i. e. upon the man, the conqueror. Inscriptions, indeed, were often made upon *pillars;* but *οὐ μὴ ἐξέλθῃ* cannot well be predicated of a pillar. Inscriptions were also made upon *men*, and upon parts of their costume; see Rev. 7: 3. 22: 4. 14: 1, where the servants of God have יְהוָה marked on their *foreheads* or rather *frontlets.* So the followers of the beast and false prophet, Rev. 13: 16. 14: 11. 19: 20. 20: 4. I take the imagery here to be of the same nature as that in Rev. 2: 17, where the *new name* inscribed on a splendid diamond in front of the mitre or crown is mentioned. In 2: 17 only the *new name*, i. e. the name of the Saviour or Logos, is mentioned; for there the comparison is made simply with the mitre of the Jewish high priests which had but *one* name inscribed upon it. Here the speaker enlarges the idea, and comprehends the name of Jehovah, of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21: 2), and also the new name, viz. that of the Redeemer. The name of *God* inscribed on one's forehead, designates the generic idea of one devoted to objects and purposes spiritual and heavenly; the name of the *New Jerusalem*, marks the peculiar city to which the conqueror belongs; the NEW NAME is that which is peculiar to the *Christians* as such, to a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. With such a distinction impressed on him, or at least borne upon the frontlet of his mitre, the conqueror would be recognized and acknowledged by all as entitled to his place in the New Jerusalem.

Καινῆς Ἱερουσαλήμ; see the splendid description in Rev. 21: 10 seq. The idea of a heavenly city and temple, or rather of a city the whole of which is itself like a temple (Rev. 21: 22), is a familiar one in the New Testament; see Rev. xxi. Rev. 22: 14. Heb. 11: 10, 16. 12: 22. 13: 14. Phil. 3: 20, where *πολίτευμα* means *citizenship*. Gal. 4: 26 al.—*Ἡ καταβαίνουσα κ. τ. λ.*, so in Rev. 21: 2, where it is considered as a splendid appendage of the *new* earth which is to be created, at the final consummation of all things. To indicate its heavenly or spiritual nature, it is represented as descending from God out of heaven. As a *citizen* of this glorious and eternal city, the conqueror in question is to wear its *insignia* or badges.—*Τὸ ὄνομά μου τὸ καινόν*, see on 2: 17. The Saviour's name, beyond all reasonable doubt, is designated by this. —As to the grammatical construction of *ἡ καταβαίνουσα* (Nom. instead of the normal Gen.) see, in respect to this idiom which is somewhat common, N. Test. Gramm. § 172. 1, also Vol. I. p. 234 seq.

(14) And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: Thus saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning [head, prince] of the creation of God.

Ὁ Ἀμήν signifies the same as that which is immediately after subjoined, viz. *πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός*; see on *μάρτυς πιστός* in 1: 5. The object of employing these designations here seems to be, to remind the church addressed that the *comminations* of its Lord and Master are to be believed, as well as his promises. See, on similar repetitions in Hebrew and Greek, Vol. I. p. 230.

Ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως has been, as might be expected, a subject of contest among critics, on account of its application to Christ. (1) It has been compared with *ὁ πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν* in 1: 5, and so made to mean *the first of the new spiritual creation*, i. e. the first in order of those raised from the dead. But if this was the writer's meaning, would he not—must he not—have said: *ἀρχὴ τῶν ἐγεγερμένων ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν*? And even this would have been a unique expression. There is some resemblance however to such a phraseology, in *ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων* in 1 Cor. 15: 20. Yet this resemblance is more apparent than real. "The *first-fruits* of those who have fallen asleep" means, he who is first in order raised from the dead; while *ἀρχὴ τῶν ἐγεγερμένων ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν* would mean, the *Lord* or *King* of the dead. This is an idea which is not expressed in the Scriptures, except in such cases as Rom. 14: 9, where universality of dominion is designated by saying, "that he might exercise dominion over the dead and the living." The solution before us, then, is not satisfactory.

(2) *The author of creation*; see Staeudlin's Moral Introduction to the New Testament, p. 251. But although the *sentiment* thus conveyed

is biblical (John 1: 3. Heb. 1: 2. Col. 1: 16), yet it cannot well be shown that the word ἀρχή means *creator* or *author* of all things.

(3) *The first created being.* So Ewald, and some others. Ewald refers to an alleged Jewish opinion, in the apostolic age, that angels were created before the world; and therefore the Messiah, who was superior to them, must have been created before angels. He thinks that Job 38: 7, "When the morning stars sang together, etc.," was the source of the alleged Jewish opinion; and such an opinion is in fact found in Genesis Parva, an apocryphal Hebrew book of late origin mentioned by Jerome, and quoted by Zonaras, Lib. I. Annal. p. 4. The passages respecting this may be found in Fab. Cod. Apoc. V. Test. I. p. 851. Ewald appeals also to the Rabbinical *dicta* cited in Eisenmenger's Entdeckt. Judenthum, II. p. 370 seq.; but here, while Jalkoth Hadash is cited for such an opinion, one may find also other opinions, viz. that the angels were created on the second day, and on the fifth day, and every day, etc.; all of which is accompanied with some gross and repulsive conceits. Ewald also appeals to Suicer's Thesaurus, I. p. 32 seq.; which, however, merely gives the opinions of the Christian fathers, during and after the fourth century. Of the earlier fathers only Origen is cited; and he held that angels, and indeed all pure intelligent substances, were created πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, i. e. from eternity. So we are destitute of the proof requisite to establish such a Jewish opinion as Ewald appeals to, at the early period in question. Even if the Rabbins cited in Eisenmenger had testified in such a way as Ewald represents, it would be little or nothing to the purpose. Who does not know, that most of the curious and speculative conceits which they exhibit, were of *Cabbalistic* origin, and later than the first century? *

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* That Christ was expected by the Jews to be *superior* to the angels, is clear enough from the manner of the appeal in Heb. i., where the writer seems to regard this opinion as undeniable, and speaks merely in the way of confirming it, in order that he may urge it upon his readers with the more force. See also Rev. 19: 10. 1 Pet. 1: 12. 3: 22. Phil. 2: 10. Col. 1: 15—17. 2: 10. But that Christ was *created* before the foundation of the world, (Ewald asserts that the Jews of the Saviour's time held such an opinion, and that the Saviour himself at least recognized it), is not proved at all by any of the texts to which this critic appeals. 1 Pet. 1: 20. Eph. 1: 4. 3: 9—11, surely cannot be relied on, as he supposes, for such a purpose; for they are quite foreign to it. And as to Col. 1: 15, πρωτότοκος τῆς κτίσεως, it must be merely a constructive exegesis, which can make out from this the sentiment in question. Does not πρωτότοκος, in its *figurative* sense, (the literal sense is out of question here), apply to *preeminence of rank*, rather than mere precedence of age or time? And is not this the design of Paul here? Would a writer like him represent the Messiah as the *Creator* of all things, (Eph. 3: 9. 1 Cor. 8: 6. Col. 1: 16, 17), and then say that he was himself created, i. e. was a *mere creature?* So long as the passage in Col. 1: 15 is fairly susceptible of another sense than that which Ewald gives it, so long, with such views

(4) *The beginning* (in the active sense) *of the creation*, i. e. the Creator of all things; scarcely differing from No. 2 above. So Vitringa and many others. This would be a metonymical use of the word, putting the effect for the cause, i. e. the beginning of the creation for him who caused it to begin. I will not say that this is an impossible sense of the phraseology; but surely we should adopt such an exegesis only by virtue of some plain necessity; for in such a case only could we adopt it with any good degree of satisfaction. But in the present case, another and more obvious meaning is possible, and one more conformed to the *usus loquendi* of the New Testament. For,

(5) Ἀρχή is often used for *preeminence*, *princedom*, and also (very naturally) for *rulers*, *princes*: Luke 20: 20. Luke 12: 11. Tit. 3: 1. Eph. 1: 21. 3: 10. 6: 12. Col. 2: 10, 15. 1 Cor. 15: 24. Rom. 8: 38. Col. 1: 16. See also Josephus and Xen., for like usage, in Rob. Lex. Why then, when we have the ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων before us of 1: 5

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before me, should I be disposed to give it a sense differing from his method of construction.

It is true, that some of the Rabbins, taking Mic. 5: 2 as the basis, "His goings forth are from everlasting," have said that the Messiah was created before the world; see Eisenmeng. I. p. 316. But then the same Rabbies make the Law, the Temple, and Paradise, etc., eternal in the same sense. All this moreover, i. e. this in such a shape, is of the *later* speculation. That Christ would have a nature which existed before the world was, is plain enough from the texts above cited, which show that he was the *Creator* of the worlds; but that this nature was itself a *created* one,—*that* is quite another question, see John 1: 3. Rom. 9: 5. Rev. 1: 17. 2: 8. See also Ascens. Is. 9: 5, "He who turned thee back again is thy LORD GOD, the LORD CHRIST, who will be called in the world, *Jesus*." So too in Enoch 48: 3—5, "Before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of heaven were formed, *his name was invoked* in the presence of the Lord of spirits. . . . The Elect and the Concealed One existed in his [God's] presence, *before the world was created, and forever*." Comp. Enoch 61: 10, "Kings, princes, and all who possess the earth, shall glorify *him* [the Messiah] who has dominion over all things, him who was concealed; for from the beginning the Son of Man existed in secret, whom the Most High preserved in the presence of his power and revealed to the elect." (v. 13.) "All shall pray to him, and petition him for mercy." Such passages make it clear, indeed, what the Jews thought of the *antemundane* existence of Christ; but not a word in all this of his being *created*, or being created before the angels.

Why should we then, or how can we with propriety, adopt the opinion of Ewald, that ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως means *the first created being*? If this meaning had been intended, would not the writer have said: πρῶτος πάντων κτισμάτων, or πρῶτος τῶν κτισθέντων? And farther; as ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός here is plainly taken from Rev. 1: 5, and there, in connection with this phrase, stands ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς, is it not evident that the writer had this in his mind here, and that he has repeated the same sentiment merely with some small modification, i. e. he has used the *abstract* ἀρχή instead of the concrete ἄρχων, and has made the extent of the dominion (now designated by τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ) wider than before (in 1: 5), when he merely said: τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς?

where such a sense is certain, should we hesitate to give the like sense here, viz., *Head* or *Lord of the creation of God?* Not, as Wetstein, Eichhorn, and others, *Head of the church;* for then it would be: *τῆς καινῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ*, Gal. 6: 15. 2 Cor. 5: 17. But here we may give the phrase a more enlarged sense, like that in Phil. 2: 9—11, *Head of the whole creation.* This is surely firmer ground than that of Vitringa.

(15) I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would that thou wert either cold or hot!

Cold would imply a state absolutely unchristian. *Hot* here means a fervid and zealous state, such as the times and circumstances then imperiously demanded of Christians. *Ὄφελον* = *utinam*, in reality Aor. II of *ὀφείλω*, used in epic poetry and the later Greek as a particle, instead of the regular form of the verb, which would be *ὤφελον*. It is followed by the Indic. or Opt. Griesbach reads *ἦς* here, Subj.; but the Subj. is not appropriate to this particle, and therefore *ἦς* is the better reading.

(16) So then, because thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit thee out of my mouth.

Χλιαρός here designates *tepid*, i. e. like tepid water, which is odious to the palate and provokes vomiting. The imagery is intensely strong, and denotes high disgust at the state of indifference in which the Laodicean church were. This balancing between Christ and the world, when dangers press and difficulties are frequent and formidable, is not allowed to the soldiers of the cross. When they enlist under the banner of their great Captain, they enlist for *service*, not for the sake of furloughs.

One is tempted also to make another application of the sentiment here, which however probably was not in the mind of the writer. This is, that when we hear some persons protesting against the use of hot or cold drinks, as ruinous to health, and insisting on the *tepid*, we may reply: The Apocalyptist has appealed to our very nature, as revolting at the *χλιαρός* which you recommend. Should we have been created with such a taste, if it were in itself destructive? *Excess* in drinks hot or cold, as excess everywhere else and in all things, is no doubt injurious; but it would be difficult to show that a moderate use of them is so.

(17) Because thou sayest: I am rich, and have become wealthy and have need of nothing, and dost not know that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked;

Λέγεις may be taken in the same sense in which *φημί* and אָמַר are often used, viz., for *internal speaking*, i. e. thinking, imagining, supposing, etc. It matters but little, whether we suppose here the Laodicean church

to have merely thought in their hearts that which the sequel of the text exhibits, or expressed themselves outwardly to the same effect. The latter case would merely indicate either a little more frankness, or a little more impudence, as the case might be.

Πλούσιος in respect to *wealth, property*, or in respect to spiritual gifts and graces? The former, I can scarcely doubt. There are and have been, indeed, many *spiritual* boasters in the world; but then they are for the most part men of an enthusiastic turn of mind, and commonly have much fervour, such as it is; whereas the Laodicean church are plainly characterized as wordling-Christians, grown luke-warm as to divine things by the eager pursuit of riches. The world is filled with examples of the same nature, at the present hour.—*Πεπλούτηκα* only renders the affirmation more intense; and the following clause adds still more to this intensity, viz., *and I have need of nothing.* In other words, I have accumulated riches to such a degree, that all my wants and desires can be gratified.

Ὁ ταλαίπωρος καὶ ὁ ἐλεεινός with the article; but *πτωχός* etc. without it. The article before *ἐλεεινός*, however, is omitted in some Codices, probably because the common principle in this case, would seem to require the omission; for continuous nouns or adjectives, connected and coordinate, usually omit the article after the first noun or adjective; N. Test. Gramm. § 89. 9. But I prefer the reading *ὁ ἐλεεινός*, because I regard the writer as intending to lay some special emphasis or stress on *ταλαίπωρος* and *ἐλεεινός*; which are no doubt to be taken in a spiritual sense. It must be, that if the Laodiceans were in reality Christians, (and we are not constrained to deny this), still they were in such a state of spiritual declension, that they must after all have been truly wretched, not being able fully to enjoy either their wealth or their religion. Hence *ὁ ταλαίπωρος* and *ὁ ἐλεεινός*. For the rest; *πτωχός κ. τ. λ.*, being *without* the article, seem to admit of a less intensive sense, and to denote what is still compatible with having some principle of piety, although it was then destitute of any present active and efficient development. It may be, that this view of the case requires too nice distinctions; yet one can hardly imagine that all the church at Laodicea were hypocrites, see v. 19, which seems to forbid such a supposition. If they were not, then the three latter adjectives should be taken in a comparative or modified sense. The omission of the article comports well with this.

Πτωχός, spiritually *poor*, in the way of antithesis to the preceding *πλούσιος*; see the like antithesis in 2: 9. Sentiment: 'Whatever worldly possessions thou mayest have, or however abundant they are, thou art *poor* in respect to spiritual gifts and graces.'—*Τυφλός, blind* in a spiritual respect, i. e. not discerning thy duty, nor the true nature and excellence of spiritual acquisitions.—*Γυμνός, naked*, i. e. destitute of

the goodly vesture of a truly Christian spirit, and therefore exposed by thy condition to the contemptuous gaze of the world, to whom thy inconsistent conduct must be manifest.

(18) I counsel thee to procure of me gold tried by fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white garments, that thou mayest put them on and the shame of thy nakedness may not appear; and eye-salve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see.

Ἀγοράσαι to *procure* or *obtain;* for the word does not always have the specific meaning of *buying* a thing by paying a price for it; see Is. 55: 1, where "he that hath no money" is invited "to *buy* [i. e. procure sustenance] without money and without price." The graces bestowed by the Great Head of the church are not *bought* by an equivalent price, but are obtained *κατὰ χάριν*.

Πεπυρωμένον = צָרוּף, *expurgated by fire*, Is. 1: 25. Mal. 3: 2, 3, comp. 1 Pet. 1: 7. The meaning is: 'I counsel thee to procure of me the true and unadulterated riches, i. e. spiritual gifts and graces, so that thou mayest be rich in the true sense of the word.'—*Ἱμάτια λευκά*, see on v. 4 above. It is not the vestments that wealth can procure, which they need, but that *white linen* which is the righteousness of the saints, Rev. 19: 8.—*Γυμνότητός σου* here of course is to be taken in the spiritual sense.

Κολλούριον, *eye-salve*, a medicament (lit. construed) for sore or diseased eyes. Here it is the eyes of their spiritual understanding which are meant; although the imagery is taken from the physical eye.—The Saviour here proposes a remedy for all their faults, in the gifts and the graces which he bestows. He is the source of all spiritual good to the believer. In and through him are all the blessings bestowed which the Christian needs.

(19) Whomsoever I love, I reprove and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent.

This implies, of course, that they were still in some degree the objects of his love, as children; comp. Heb. 12: 6—8. Prov. 3: 11, 12. —*Ἐάν* for *ἄν*, (see Winer § 43. 6 in Note), which makes *φιλῶ* (Subj.) to express a supposition or condition.—*I reprove and chasten* or *discipline*. This is appropriate here, because he had just uttered words of sharp rebuke and admonition.—*Ζήλωσον* is directly opposed to their state of frigidity and indifference; q. d. rouse up to energetic Christian action and development.—*Μετανόησον*, i. e. they must repent of the misconduct which he had been reproving. Comp. Gal. 4: 18.

(20) Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any one will hearken to my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me.

Ἕστηκα used in the Pres. tense; N. Test. Gramm. § 136. 3. *c.*

Lit. *I have taken my station.* The imagery here employed is that of the Saviour as going round among the dwellings of the Laodicean churches, and paying a visit to each, and holding friendly intercourse with the inmates.—*Κρούω* for *κόπτω*; sometimes so in the Attic Greek, but not very common; see Lob. ad Phryn. p. 177.

Ἐάν τις ἀκούσῃ τῆς φωνῆς μου refers to a custom of the person who knocked, to speak and let it be known by his voice who he was; comp. Acts 12: 13, 14. Cant. 5: 2.—*Δειπνήσω, sup.* Supper was the social and the principal meal of the ancients; comp. Gen. 19: 1—3. 18: 1—8. Here the addition of *καὶ αὐτὸς μετ' ἐμοῦ* shows, that the Redeemer would treat the penitent and obedient members of this backslidden church with the greatest condescension and kindness. The whole is an image or symbol of a feast (so to speak) in the future world. Comp. Luke 14: 15. 22: 16—18. Mark 14: 25. Rev. 19: 9. Matt. 22: 2, 3. See a kindred idea, but in a more intensive form, in Rev. 3: 21.

(21) He that conquereth—to him will I give to sit with me on my throne, even as I overcame, and am seated with my Father on his throne.

In 2: 7 we have *τῷ νικῶντι . . . αὐτῷ*, but here *ὁ νικῶν*, i. e. the Nom. absolute. Cases of the like nature in the O. Testament Scriptures are numerous. They are not unfrequent in the New; see on v. 5 above. —As to the language and sentiment, see under 1: 6, where nearly all the cases of this nature are adduced and presented to the view of the reader. *To be seated on the Redeemer's throne*, is to reign with him, *συμβασιλεῦσαι μετ' αὐτοῦ*; an idea, as may be seen by consulting the commentary on chap. 1: 6, which is frequent in the O. Testament and in the New. To say the least, it presents to our view a most vivid and striking image of the future exaltation and glory of the saints. The enthronization of the Redeemer here spoken of, is that which was awarded to him on account of his having achieved the mediatorial work. In *our* nature he then became enthroned and exalted; Phil. 2: 5—11. Heb. 1: 3. 8: 1. The like to this, i. e. so far as our nature and condition render us capable of being elevated and glorified, will be granted to all who prove to be final victors in the contest with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

General Remarks on the Seven Epistles.

At the close of the preceding particular examination of these Epistles, it may be not inapposite to make a few suggestions in the way of recapitulation or summary criticism.

Nothing can be plainer, than that they are the result of a specific design and plan of execution. The manner in which they all commence

and close; the triplicity of their contents (see Vol. I. § 7. p. 132); the intimate connection which they have with the vision which precedes them, and with the visions that follow (see § 25. p. 434), thus demonstrating the *unity* of the whole book; the fact that they are all so nearly of the same length, which shows a special regard on the part of the writer to a regular plan and to the nature of the book in which they were to appear—all these things are obvious to the attentive reader. It is quite plain, too, that all of these epistles exhibit incontestible marks of having been written at a time when the churches addressed were in a state of persecution and of peril, (see § 13. p. 222 seq.). Hence the appositeness of the succeeding parts of the book to such a state of things. As to the *matter* of the epistles, it has been taxed with an unusual degree of severity. It is clear, indeed, that no part of the N. Testament exhibits higher demands of holiness and faith than this. The standard of Christian morals and fidelity is exceedingly elevated and unbending. But is it not equally clear, that a spirit of tender regard to the weaknesses of human nature is manifested throughout? The speaker, or writer, is much more prone to commend and encourage, than to censure or reprove. Where he finds occasion to do both, his commendations occupy the first place; see Rev. 2: 2 seq. 2: 13 seq. 2: 19 seq. 3: 8 seq. Never does he forget to hold out the prospect of glorious reward to the faithful and obedient, and thus he encourages those who were ready to waver. His rebukes are indeed awful; but let it be remembered that the heresy of Balaam, which infected (as it would seem) three of the churches (2: 6, 14, 20), deserved stern rebuke. So did the stupid and listless state of the church at Laodicea, specially at such a time as that. In a word, the whole shape of the composition demonstrates that the mind which dictated it was in a high and intense state of feeling. This portion of the work belongs to a book, the body of which is confessedly *poetical*, and does itself naturally partake, in a high degree, of the nature of such a book.

I cannot help feeling, that when all these considerations are taken into view, that a comparison of these epistles with the calm and hortatory epistles of John, written on another and different occasion, and in later life, should be made with all due allowances for the respective circumstances of each. Conclusions have been drawn from such a comparison, adverse to the apostolic origin of the apocalyptic epistles. But when all the circumstances of the two cases so diverse are well weighed, is not the conclusion broader than the premises will support?

It lies on the very face of these epistles, that a great variety of character and circumstances, in many respects, is brought to view. The natural consequence is, a rich harvest of practical instruction to the churches of every age. Well may we say, with Paul on another occa-

sion: "These things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world have come."

The question has been raised and agitated, whether John sent a copy of his work to each of the churches addressed. Some have supposed not only that this was the case, but that the epistolary part was omitted in each case, with the exception of that epistle which belonged to each particular church addressed. But the manner in which these epistles are all connected with preceding and following parts of the book and with each other, seems to forbid this supposition. As to the number of copies which John wrote out for the churches, we have no means of deciding; nor is it of any moment. The work is evidently *encyclical*, in its very nature; and a copy sent to the church at Ephesus, would beyond all doubt ensure the circulation of the book. It is quite possible, perhaps even probable, that John occupied some of the lonely hours of his exile, in writing out several copies.

PRINCIPAL VISIONS OF THE APOCALYPSE: IV. 1—XXII. 5.

General Remarks.

We come now to the PRINCIPAL VISIONS, which occupy nearly all of the remaining part of the book, in which the future prospects of the Christian church are disclosed, and its prosperity and the overthrow of its enemies developed. Plain is it, at first view, that a disclosure like this would serve to cheer and animate the persecuted and desponding churches, and contribute much to their perseverance in the Christian faith. Equally plain is it also, that the same disclosures are adapted to accomplish a similar end, in every age of the church until her last and final triumph. No book, it may well be said, is better adapted to be a *Vade Mecum* for the heralds of the cross, in foreign and heathen lands and amidst trials and discouragements, than the book before us.

I have named the subsequent part of this work the *principal Visions*, in the way of distinction from the vision in the first three chapters or introductory part. I do not, like Ewald, De Wette, and others, regard the second part of the book as constituting but one continuous vision, merely distinguished by some shifting of the scenes. We may easily see, in fact, that the scene is very much changed, (comp. as examples, 4: 1, 2 and 12: 18; also 14: 1 with 15: 1; and these with 17: 3. 18: 1); so that we must at all events assume, that there were a number of distinct and different, although subordinate, visions. Sometimes the transition from one to the other is noted, as in 4: 1. 7: 1. 18: 1. 19: 1, by *μετὰ ταῦτα*; sometimes the transition is made by the indication of a new station or sphere of vision, as in 12: 18. 17: 3; and again by the mere conjunctive yet transitive particle *καί* (which is used like the ו in וַיְהִי of the Hebrews), with the concurrent circumstances which are related, as in 10: 1. 12: 1. 14: 1. 15: 1. 20: 11. There is, undoubtedly, a general *unity of design*, viz. the triumph and final glory of the church, and the disappointment, defeat, and punishment of all its enemies. But

the subordinate parts of this are distinctly marked by the nature of the contents of the book, if not by the artificial divisions of the writer. It seems to lie upon the face of the work, that there are *three* great catastrophes in it (see § 7 of Vol. I.), to which all of the subordinate and intermediate parts are to be referred; and that the whole is crowned by a view of the complete accomplishment of all that was intended in bringing about these catastrophes, and which had been promised to the faithful servants of God. The first part, if we comprehend the general introduction to the principal visions, extends from chap. 4: 1 to the end of chap. xi. The second part from chap. 12: 1 to the end of chap. xix. The third part is contained in chap. 20: 1—10; to which is appended the final results and the future glory of the church, 20: 11—21: 5. These catastrophes are distinctly marked by their diverse matter, and by the termination of each with the overthrow of persecuting and formidable adversaries. As to the *Exodium* as we may name it, chap. 20: 11—22: 5, it exhibits the crowning part of the whole—the realization of all that had been predicted and promised—so that here the *general* unity of the piece shines forth conspicuously. The close of the book, 22: 6 seq., is merely matter pertaining to John and his relation to his readers—the *valedictory* of one, who had been long and earnestly addressing them on topics of a most interesting nature. For a full account of the economy of the book, see Vol. I. § 10.

CHAPTER IV.

Theophany, or Exordium to the principal Visions.

The Apocalyptist has, in respect to his *exordium* or introduction to the principal Visions, followed the example of Isaiah and Ezekiel. The *theophanies* in Is. VI, where the prophet is consecrated to his office or inaugurated as a seer, and in Ezek. I, bear so strong a resemblance to the one before us, that it is impossible to mistake the similitude. As to the leading elements, however, in the theophany recorded by John, they are not mere *imitations*. The manner of them is such as to show that the writer thought for himself, although the elements of thought, or rather of *costume*, were drawn from the ancient Scriptures. Their contents had in fact become a prominent part of the very elements of his own thoughts. Yet, while all this is plain and undeniable, it would be difficult to show that he has in any case merely copied them, or directly intended to produce nothing more than a mere imitation.

In regard to the object of the *theophany* before us it seems proper to remark, that the scene is deeply impressive, and is well adapted to produce a reverent and solemn attention in the mind of the reader. Such is certainly the effect upon the mind of any one, who reads Is. VI. and Ezek. I. in an intelligent manner. There is also a manifest propriety in the theophany, as it has respect to the preparation of John's mind for his important work. A vision of God, in his awful and glorious majesty, must silence every unholy or forbidden desire, and every light or wandering imagination, and fix the attention with the deepest interest on the things disclosed in the sequel. Such a preparation, then, is evidently congruous with the nature of the case and the object to be accomplished.

It is altogether a subordinate question, whether anything strictly *ocular*, in this case, was exhibited. It seems more probable, that being ἐν πνεύματι, whatever was seen was seen with the *eye of the mind*, i. e. in prophetic ecstasy. If Paul could not tell whether he was in or out of the body, in a similar case (2 Cor. 12:

2), it does not seem altogether congruous to assume mere literal and ocular vision in these cases. The scenes are too high and holy and spiritual to be witnessed with the mere fleshly eye. The spirit only seems capable of beholding them, in their true attitudes.

There is another view of this case, however, which seems to be adopted by most of the recent German writers on the Apocalypse. This is, that the whole representation is simply the production of the author's *imagination;* and they compare this with the factitious visions, which poets, and some other writers of fancy, so often introduce into their compositions.

If now we should say, that the substance of chap. IV. may be comprehended in the following statement, viz., that the mind of the Apocalyptist was deeply impressed with a pervading sense of God's power and glory; that by being brought into such a state it was prepared for the prophetic disclosures which follow; and that the writer has merely undertaken to designate these simple truths, by the employment of symbols and of figurative poetic language; this would not, perhaps, detract much from the essential meaning of the communications in the Apocalypse. Assuming merely this, we might say that the imagination and fancy of the writer were in active and vigorous exercise, when selecting and employing the imagery contained in chap. IV. The appeal might even be made to Ps. xviii. and Is. xiv. for striking examples of a similar method of composition, where the *costume* appears to be supplied by the imagination of the writer. To my own mind, however, the whole matter in the present case, notwithstanding the different view of it just suggested, appears in a different light. In chap. 4: 2 the writer says: *εὐθέως ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι,* and then goes on to relate his *ecstatic* vision. Guided by this, I cannot doubt that we are to regard the sequel, as intended by the writer to be considered as having passed before the *eye of his mind*, while rapt into prophetic vision. Why should not the writer, in the present case, be considered as his own best interpreter? I know there are those who disdain the idea of *inspiration;* but I do not and cannot think with them.

The substance of this *introductory* vision may be designated in a few words. Heaven is opened, and God is seen enthroned in radiant splendour. Around his throne are gathered the elders of the church, and the presence-angels. Lightning and thunder, as on Sinai of old, announce the awful presence of the Godhead. Before the throne is a pellucid pavement, like chrystal. The throne is supported by four living creatures, filled with eyes, (in order to denote their watchfulness and perspicacity), and each one has a face symbolic of some leading class of created beings. They are furnished with wings, in order that they may be presented as "swift to do the will of God." These living creatures pay continual homage to the Godhead, whose throne they support. The elders who surround the throne echo their lofty strains, and adore and praise the Maker of heaven and earth.

Such is the *theophany* of chap. IV.; more expanded than that of Is. VI. but still exhibiting some of its distinctive characteristics; less expanded than that of Ezek. I, but still proffering many traits of resemblance. The author has evidently combined the leading features of both; while the material furnished by them receives its peculiar shape, after all, from his own plastic hand, as we shall see in the sequel. The continued theophany in chap. v. will be separately considered in its appropriate place.

(1) After these things I looked, and behold! a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, as of a trumpet speaking with me, said: Come up hither, and I will show thee what must take place hereafter.

Μετὰ ταῦτα, i. e. after the things related in the preceding vision; which of course shows the intimate connection between the two, and that the preceding vision had already been described. *How long* after the first vision the second commenced, the writer does not say. Nor does he, at the close of chap. iii, mention the cessation of the first vision, nor the departure of the Saviour. Still, the nature of the transition before us plainly indicates this cessation and departure; yea, even more, for in v. 3 we are expressly told that the writer again became entranced, *εὐθέως ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι*, which plainly indicates that his former trance had passed away, and that some interval of time, (we cannot tell how much), had elapsed.

Εἶδον, *I looked*, more lit. *I perceived; βλέπω* more appropriately means *to look*. Yet the sense here seems evidently to require an expression, which indicates the action of *looking* in order to perceive. The demands of our English idiom, therefore, are better answered by the verb *looked*.—*Θύρα ἀνεῳγμένη, a door opened.* The Hebrews regarded the רָקִיעַ, i. e. the visible expanse of the heavens, as a solid and extended ceiling or arch over the earth. The rain, according to their popular idiom, comes down through the *windows*, i. e. apertures, of heaven; and God, who dwells above this expanse, can of course be seen only by the *opening* of the heavens. So in Ezek. 1: 1, "The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God." On this passage our author doubtless had his eye. John speaks of *θύρα ἀνεῳγμένη*, which is only a varied mode of expressing the same idea that is designated by different phraseology in Ezekiel. Comp. Matt. 3: 16. Luke 3: 21. Acts 7: 56. 10: 11, all in accordance with Ezekiel. Comp. also, Ascens. Is. 6: 6. 10: 24 seq.

The *voice* which he heard seems plainly to be that of the Redeemer, speaking from the heavenly world, comp. the sequel; he does not now appear on earth, as in the first vision, 1: 10 seq.—*ἡ φωνὴ ἡ πρώτη ἣν ἤκουσα*, i. e. the accents or tone of the voice, on this occasion, were so like those in the former vision, that John at once recognized them as proceeding from the same person. The reader should note here, how intimately and necessarily this sacred vision is connected with the first, by allusions of such a nature. For *ὡς σάλπιγγος κ. τ. λ.*, see on 1: 10.—*Λέγων*, where we should expect *λέγουσα* agreeing with *φωνή*. The construction is certainly not according to the usual laws of syntax. Still, *λέγων* is not in fact to be taken as strictly agreeing with *φωνή*. The matter stands thus: "Lo! a door opened in heaven, and [lo!] the first voice which, etc."—*λέγων said* = *ἦν λέγων*, (for so the participle

is often constructed in the Apocalypse), and this refers to the *person* who uttered the voice, the construction depending on an assumed metonymy; but see N. Test. Gramm. § 128. 5. *b*, which shows, that even in case we assume a union with *φωνή*, the like is found in the classics. Or we may explain it, (as Ewald does), by supposing *λέγων* to be used as equivalent to the Hebrew לֵאמֹר, which of course has no gender. The Sept. sometimes translate this by *λέγων*, e. g. Gen. 15: 1.

Ἀνάβα ὧδε, comp. 11: 12. The *ascension* or *going up* of course has relation to the apparent elevation of the heavens above us.—*Ἀνάβα* is the usual apocopate form of Aor. 2 (formed after the model of verbs in *-μι*), for *ἀνάβηθι*, from *ἀναβαίνω*.—*Ὧδε*, *hither*, a demonstrative adverb, belonging to later Greek usage, and to the poets. The writer does not intimate in what way he was borne to the upper regions. Paul says: *ἁρπαγέντα ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ*, 2 Cor. 12: 1, 2. In Rev. 17: 3, John says: *ἀπήνεγκέ με [ὁ ἄγγελος] εἰς ἔρημον*. Ezekiel speaks of *being taken up* by the Spirit, 3: 12; and even of being carried by a lock of his hair, 8: 3. The writer in the present case has omitted everything of this nature; seemingly because he was so absorbed in his main theme, that such circumstances were to his feelings comparatively less important. If the reader will compare the like ascensions as related in the book of Enoch, he will perceive a great difference between the taste and genius of the two writers, quite to the disadvantage of the latter; see Enoch 14: 9—24. 39: 3. 70: 1—6. 86: 2. In the first two cases here, the *winds* elevate the seer, (imagery drawn probably from the whirlwind which elevated Elijah); in the two latter, the hand of some supernatural being lifts him up.

(2) And immediately I was in the spirit; and behold! a throne was set in heaven, and on the throne was One sitting.

Ἐν πνεύματι, see on 1: 10.—*Θρόνος ἔκειτο*, not that the seer beheld the placing or stationing of a throne which had been recently brought there, but the idea is, that he saw it as already fixed or established.—On this throne was *Καθήμενος*, q. d. the unnameable, indescribable Godhead; comp. Rev. 20: 11. "Reticetur nomen ob reverentiam." There can in this case be no doubt who is meant; and the manner of expression certainly fills the mind with mysterious awe. Comp. Dan. 7: 9. In Enoch 14: 21 seq. is a passage much like the present one with its sequel; yet the advantage as to taste in composition, is quite on the side of John.

(3) And he who sat was in appearance like to a jasper stone and a sardian; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in appearance like to an emerald.

Ὁ καθήμενος, here the repetition of the word demands the article.

—Ὁράσει, the Dat. signifying *in regard to appearance;* showing that the writer was acquainted with the classical idiom in respect to the use of the Dative.—Ἰάσπιδι, *to the jasper*, a precious stone of various colours, purple, cerulaean, green, etc. Here, no doubt, the *red* or *purple* is intended, in order to designate the resplendence of the divine Majesty. —So also σαρδίῳ, means a precious stone of *blood-red* or *carnation* hue. Both images together denote the powerful splendour which beamed from him who sat upon the throne. Ezekiel (1: 26, 27) compares him who sat on the throne to חַשְׁמַל, i. e. polished brass, and also to fire. The images in John are more select, and withal more splendid.

The ἶρις or rainbow around the throne is an exquisite conception. Such was the splendour of the throne that the eye could not bear it. It is softened by this beautiful veil cast over the scene.—Σμαραγδίνῳ, *emerald*, is of a green hue. The Iris is compared to it here, because the modified and mild colour of green apparently predominates in the rainbow, and delights the eye of every beholder. Ezekiel (1: 28) presents the like imagery; but he presents it less distinctly and definitely than here. John exhibits the ἶρις again in Rev. 10: 1, as surrounding the radiant head of an angel.—Ὅμοιος as agreeing with [ἡ] ἶρις here has stumbled the critics. Ewald (p. 46) proposes to translate thus: "Iris circa thronum, similis [est] thronus smaragdo;" unnaturally, to say the least. Much easier is another solution. The Attics more usually employed adjectives ending in *-ιος -ιμος -ειος -αιος*, as adjectives of only *two* endings. Ὅμοιος then may, by good usage, be feminine here; and then all difficulty vanishes; N. Test. Gramm. § 32. 1. *c.*

(4) And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones, and on these thrones four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and crowns of gold upon their heads.

The arrangement of the scenery before the mental eye of the prophet, is to be regarded thus: The throne of God is in the midst of the circle of a great assembly; the *presence-angels* stand immediately on either hand and before him who is on the throne; although they are not mentioned until afterwards in v. 5. Next beyond these, in the circle, are the twenty-four thrones of the elders. Why *thrones?* Because, they are *kings* and *priests* to God, and will reign forever and ever; see 1: 6, and the references there given, and especially Rev. 3: 21. *Throne* means a *magnificent* or *regal seat.* The emphatic meaning of the whole verse should be noted. Presence-angels *stand* in the attitude of ministering servants, Rev. 8: 2; the redeemed *sit* on thrones in the presence of God. For a like sentiment, comp. 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3.

But why *twenty-four?* Some say: Because there are twelve tribes of Israel, and twelve apostles; and so here are representatives both for the ancient and for the Christian church, corresponding to each of the

tribes of Israel. But the Christian church, so far as it comes from the Gentile world, is not made up of *twelve* nations or tribes. A more probable reason is, that the *priests* were divided by David into twenty-four classes, (1 Chron. 24: 3—19, comp. Luke 1: 5, ἐξ ἐφημερίας Ἀβιά), each of which had a head; and these presided over all the services of the temple. So, in the worship of the heavenly temple above, Christians, who are "made priests unto God," take the lead in the services there, and approach near to the divine presence. The form of the representation is borrowed from the course and manner of worship in the earthly temple. Comp., as to the twenty-four divisions of the priests, the twenty-five men in the temple, Ezek. 8: 16 and 11: 1, i. e. this includes the high priest and the twenty-four heads of the orders of the priesthood. In Ezekiel they are introduced as *leading* the profane worship which they practised. *Πρεσβύτεροι*, in our text, is a name of dignity = זְקֵנִים, and expressive of the *orderly* precedence which these leaders of heavenly worship enjoyed.

Πρεσβυτέρους, *καθημένους*, *περιβεβλημένους*, and *στεφάνους*, all in the Acc. case, where we should of course expect the Nom., as *θρόνοι* in the leading clause stands in the Nominative. But this change of case in participles, which make separate clauses in a sentence, and thus form a kind of independent sentence, is frequent in the Apocalypse, and not by any means unknown to the classic writers; see Winer de Soloecismis etc. Apoc., p. 150, Exeget. Studien, Heft I, who gives examples of the like from the classics. Also Lücke Einl. § 27. 4, and N. Test. Gramm. § 172. 3. Here, the regimen of the Acc., as seems quite probable, is to be made out from an implied *εἶδον*, comp. v. 1. The order of the conceptions is: *ἰδοὺ θρόνος . . . θρόνοι . . . καὶ εἶδον πρεσβυτέρους κ. τ. λ.*

Περιβεβλημένους ἐν, so with the preposition in 3: 5; elsewhere frequently, even in the Apocalypse, with the direct Acc., as is common in Greek; see Rev. 7: 9, 13. 10: 1. 11: 3, al. Either method of construction was open to the writer.—*Ἱματίοις λευκοίς*, see on 3: 4 above.—*Στεφάνους χρυσοῦς*, because they were *kings* and *priests*, and sat enthroned.

(5) And from the throne go forth lightning and voices of thunder; and seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.

The reader will easily recall the phenomena of mount Sinai, when God descended upon it. As there so here, lightning and thunder are the ensigns of his presence and awful majesty. Comp. also the theophany in Ezek. 1: 13, 24.—*φωναὶ καὶ βρονταί*, lit. *voices even thunders*; which of course means what I have expressed in the version. The imagery is awfully sublime and terrific. The throne, and He who sat upon it, are of such excessive brightness that a rainbow is needed to shield

the eye which beholds them. From this radiance lightnings are shot forth, and thunders, as Ezekiel says, "like the noise of the mighty waters." The present tense (*ἐκπορεύονται*) in an *extensive* sense, designating what is often done.

Ἑπτὰ λαμπάδες . . . πνεύματα τοῦ θεοῦ, i. e. seven resplendent glorious beings, all radiant like burning torches or lamps, stood waiting before the throne, to receive the commands of him who sat upon it; see on 3: 1, where this subject is fully discussed; also Comm. on 1: 4, with the Excursus on the Angelology of the Scriptures. Comp. also Ezek. 1: 13.

(6) And before the throne, as it were a sea of glass like to chrystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne were four living creatures filled with eyes before and behind.

(7) And the first living creature was like to a lion; and the second living creature like to an ox; and the third living creature had a face like a man; and the fourth living creature was like to a flying eagle.

Having described the throne, him who sat upon it, the presence-angels in waiting before it, and the worshippers on their thrones around it, the writer next proceeds to describe the pavement on which the whole stood. It was *like a sea of glass;* i. e. it was resplendent and pellucid, and (as he adds) *like to chrystal.* The pavements, or as we say, *floors,* of palaces and elegant houses of the East, are constructed with expensive and splendid materials. Here the idea is, that the pavements or floors are all of precious and diaphanous stones, appearing to him who should walk upon them pellucid, like the waters of the ocean. In the Coran (Sur. 27: 44), Belkis (the Sabacan queen who is said to visit Solomon) is represented as supposing the pavement, on which she walks in the audience-hall, to be a *sea.* Down to the present hour, the tesselated pavements in the parlours of the Arabs at Cairo, are constructed with great art and expense in a similar way; as Mr. Lane has shown in his excellent book on the Modern Egyptians. Comp. the *chrystal* firmament in Ezek. 1: 22, which, of course constitutes the *pavement* of the throne above it; see Ezek. 1: 22, 26, and especially Ex. 24: 10. So in the Rabbins; e. g. Pirqe Elieser: "Locus in quo thronus stat, sunt septem nubes gloriae." As to the epithet *ὑάλινη, glassy, transparent,* see examples even *ad satietatem* of the like nature from the classics, applied to water and to the sea, in Wetstein in loc.—for excess in such quotations is a fault to which he is not a little prone.

Ἐν μέσῳ here is not to be understood as if the *ζῶα* occupied a place within the throne itself; for there God was seated. It is easily explained by a reference to the converse of it, viz. *κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου*; so that *ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου* (= בְּתוֹךְ) plainly means (as we should express it) *under the throne.* The whole imagery is to be conceived of thus: The

throne on which the divine Majesty is seated, rests upon four living creatures, who form its animated and moving basis. Instead of being like the throne of earthly kings, i. e. resting upon inanimate and lifeless substances, its support is constituted of living, moving, rational creatures, ever watchful, and ever ready to move, as Ezekiel says, like "a flash of lightning," Ezek. 1: 14. These living creatures are represented as endowed with forms which are symbolical and highly significant; as we shall see in the sequel. *They are full of eyes*, i. e. they are ever wakeful and watchful, looking every way, seeing everything, and ready to move in any direction. They are, taken as a whole in respect to their ultimate design, symbolic of the all-pervading power, providence, and government of God who uses them as his instruments. *The first has the appearance of a lion:* and the lion is the king of wild beasts, and an image borrowed from him is indicative of power, strength, sway. *The second is like to an ox;* and this is the most valuable of tame beasts, and the image of patient and useful labour. *The third has the face of a man;* and this is indicative of reason or intelligence. *The fourth is like to an eagle;* and this indicates velocity and far-sighted and penetrating vision. The special meaning of these symbols is not to be applied immediately or directly to the attributes of God himself, but to be regarded as primarily indicative of powers possessed by the ζῶα. Yet these ζῶα, thus constituted, are themselves symbolic of the attributes of the Godhead. These living bearers of the Almighty's throne, as the author represents the matter, serve him with great power, with patient obedience, with quickness of intelligence and reason, and with a rapidity and perspicacity which may indeed be compared to that of the eagle, but of which this king of birds is after all only a faint image. The same may in truth be said of all the other symbols; but then, imperfect as they are, they are the best which the natural world could afford, and are therefore chosen by the author with good reason. The ultimate meaning is: God is everywhere present, and executes his purposes by an agency powerful, wise, unremitted, and speedy whenever speed is required.

Add to all this, that each is furnished with six wings (v. 8), i. e. three pair of wings (see Is. 6: 2); plainly to heighten the idea that they execute the divine commands with the greatest possible speed. These beings, moreover, endowed with such amazing powers, are employed without cessation in adoring and praising God, and seem to take the lead in the worship of heaven, as being nearest of all to the divine Majesty, i. e. supporters of his throne.

After this general view, we may now descend to the examination of particulars.—Ζῶα, corresponding in sense to the חַיּוֹת of Ezekiel (1: 5 seq.), i. e. living, animated, moving beings.—Γέμοντα . . . ὀπισθεν;

the reason of this has been already stated above. Comp. the attempts among the heathen to designate perpetual watchfulness and power to see in all directions, in the fable of Argus.—*Ἔμπροσθεν* means the *front part* or *faces* of the living creatures, which stood out from the side or bottom of the throne that rested upon their bodies; i. e. their heads were not under the throne, but merely their bodies. *Ὄπισθεν* therefore means the *bodies* or *hinder parts* which were under the throne, and not prominent *extra thronum*. In Ezek. 1: 18 and 10: 12, every part of this animated basis of the throne, i. e. every part of the living creatures, their hands, their wings, and even wheels underneath them, are all represented as being *filled with eyes*. This luxuriant imagination is modified in the present case; indeed the apparatus of the *wheels* is wholly omitted, and *eyes* are here given, as it would seem, only to the head and body of the *ζῶα*; a disposition of the imagery more congruous with our usual modes of conception than that of Ezekiel.

Τὸ ζῶον τὸ πρῶτον ὅμοιον λέοντι—like to a lion. As to the *face* only, or as to that and the whole body? The writer tells us specially, respecting the third *ζῶον*, that *it had the face of a man*, i. e. that the face only resembled that of a man; for the body must stand under the throne as one of its supports, which would be incongruous with the shape of a human body. The lion, the ox, and the eagle, however, we may easily conceive of as having their bodies under the throne, while their heads appeared as prominent on the outside of it, and not covered by it. The fact that the *face* of the third *ζῶον was human*, does not oblige us to imagine a human *body* also; for it is evident from the circumstances in which the *ζῶον* is placed, that such a body would be unfit for the object in view. Consequently we are obliged to assign some other form to the *body* than that of a man. But what this other form should be, the writer has not told us. May we not then, on the whole, suppose that the author, by his similitudes, has designed in each and all the cases only to characterize the *face* of each *ζῶον*, and that the bodies of all are alike, being one common form adapted to support the throne on a level and equally? The author indeed has not told us what this common form of the *body* was; but as he has represented it as *ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου*, i. e. under the throne, a body like that of the lion, or the ox, would seem to be the most appropriate for the support of that throne. The representation in Ezekiel is different in this respect, each *ζῶον* having four faces, and a body like that of a man; Ezek. 1: 5, 10. In the sequel, a comparison of the two representations will be made with more particularity.

Μόσχῳ does not mean *calf* here, as our English version has it, but *bos juvencus, a young bullock*, vigorous and alert; and the nature of the imagery demands this last signification. So in the Septuagint *μόσχος*

for עֵגֶל oftentimes, and *μόσχος* for שׁוֹר, פַּר, and בָּקָר, very often; see Tromm. Concord.—*Ἀετῷ πετομένῳ, a flying eagle.* If one should ask: Why the epithet *flying?* What eagles do not fly? The answer is, that such epithets are common everywhere, as adding to the *intensity* of the description. No bird exhibits a flight so powerful and rapid as the eagle, and this characteristic is designated here by the epithet *πετομένῳ*. All birds have wings; yet the Scriptures often speak of *winged fowl*. Is it an objection to the phrase *radiant light*, that all light is necessarily radiant, and therefore the epithet is superfluous? *Intensity*, in such cases, is marked by phraseology of this nature.

(8) And the four living creatures, each one of them having respectively six wings, around and within are filled with eyes, and they have no rest, day and night saying, Holy! holy! holy! Lord God Almighty, who is and was and is to come!

Ἓν καθ' ἕν marks severally, or particularizes.—*Ἔχον*, Part. Nom. absolute here, with *ἕν* for its subject, N. Test. Gramm. § 97. 2. § 172. 5. *Ἀνά* (adverb) denotes distribution to each; see Lex.—*Πτέρυγας ἕξ, six wings*, i. e. three pair of wings; comp. Is. 6: 2.—*Κύκλοθεν . . . ὀφθαλμῶν, around*, i. e. on the external part which appeared prominent without the throne, *and within*, i. e. on their bodies which were under the the throne, *were they filled with eyes*. According to the reading of the text in Knapp, Hahn, and Lachmann, we have *γέμουσιν*, where the *Receptus* reads *γέμοντα* (Part.) referring to the *ζῶα*. The support of the other reading (*γέμουσιν*) might entitle it, perhaps, to a place; although there is no necessity for adopting it, because the participle, in this book, frequently supplies the place of a verb. It is no serious objection to the assertion here, that the same idea has already been brought to view in v. 6. The repetition of an idea, in order to give intensity to it, is too frequent in this book and elsewhere to need explanation or defence. Besides, it should be noted that here it is said, that they *are full of eyes κύκλοθεν καὶ ἔσωθεν*, an expression differing from that in v. 6, and more explicit. But why should we suppose them to have eyes *ἔσωθεν*, i. e. on their bodies under the throne? The answer seems to be, merely to complete the symbol of entire watchfulness and perfection of sight in every possible direction. Inasmuch as *κυκλόθεν* here evidently means the *outer* part of the living creatures which was prominent around the throne, and *ἔσωθεν* the inner part under the throne, and both are filled with eyes, there was no direction in which it was possible to move, that was not provided for by the powers of sight ascribed to the *ζῶα*.

How to dispose of the *six wings*, (I mean as to the mode in which we may conceive of them), seems less obvious. In Is. 6: 2 and Ezek. 1: 5, it is plain that the living creatures are conceived of as having hu-

man bodies. In Isaiah, one pair of wings covers the face, in order to designate reverential awe; one pair covers the waist, for the purposes of decorum; and one is employed in flying. In Ezekiel we have only *four* wings (1: 6); one pair of these covers the waist, 1: 11, and the other is employed in flying, 1: 24. John differs from both in one important respect, viz. the bodies, as represented by him, are under the throne (v. 6), while the anterior part stands out from the throne. We have seen that the ζῶον, to which is ascribed the face of a man, cannot be supposed, in such circumstances, to have the *body* of a man, because this could not be extended ἔσωθεν *within* or *underneath* the throne. But where shall we place the *wings?* The writer has not told us. Nor has he disclosed his view of the use to which each of the three pair of wings was to be put. But inasmuch as the bodies are not *human*, it is evident that the wings of the waist are not needed for the sake of decorum. Shall we say then, that one pair is used for covering the face, (as in Isaiah and Ezekiel), while two pair are employed in flying, thus increasing the velocity; or shall we say, that the shoulders and each pair of feet are conceived of as having wings attached to them? The Greeks and Romans represented the messengers of their gods as having wings on their feet; does the prophet here intend that we should form a similar conception? I know not how these questions can be settled. The only importance that can be attached to them is, to make out the *congruity* of the writer's representation; and it is a matter of some moment to make out this, if it can be done. In either of the ways suggested, it may be done; and plainly we have, and can have, no other basis than the general congruity of the representation on which we can build. The main object is plain. *Swift to do his will* explains the leading idea attached to the symbol of the wings, whatever view may be taken of the manner in which they are conceived of.

Γέμουσιν and ἔχουσιν, it should be noted, are both of the *Pres.* tense. If this were a description of mere *actions* or *events*, there would be nothing peculiar here; for often, and by almost all writers, is the Pres. employed for the Praet., when it designates action. But here *quality* or *attribute* is described; and in such cases the Pres. is less frequent; but still, where *permanent* attributes are described, it is in place. The third pers. plur. of these verbs is the *pluralis rationalis*, common everywhere in Greek.—Ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός, the Gen. of time. This is the Hebrew mode of expression for designating the idea of *continually, incessantly.*—Λέγοντες, masc., and is used as a concord *ad sensum*, the ζῶα, as to the actions now attributed to them, being introduced as *rational* beings.

Ἅγιος κ. τ. λ. This τρισάγιον evidently comes from Is. 6: 3, קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ; as does also the sequel. The idea in this case is best ex-

pressed by the Latin: *Venerande, venerande, venerande, Domine, Deus omnipotens!* It is not God simply as pure or free from sin, which is meant, but God as *worthy of the adoration and praise* of all intelligent beings. So קָדוֹשׁ usually means, when applied to God; and so ἅγιος, often in the New Testament.

Ὁ θεός is added, by John, to the expression in Isaiah, where stands יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת simply. John has thus as it were undesignedly given a key to the Hebrew expression just quoted; which has perplexed the grammarians, because יְהוָה does not take after itself a *construct* state. The phraseology of John shows, that in his mind the meaning of the Hebrew phrase just repeated is the same as that of יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת; for he has given a translation of this, inasmuch as παντοκράτωρ designates substantially the meaning which is conveyed by צְבָאוֹת.—As to ὁ ἦν κ. τ. λ., see on the same phrase in 1: 4. It is merely another form of exhibiting the most sublime appellation of the Godhead.*

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* In this verse the imagery is similar in the main, as we may perceive, to that in Is. 6: 1—3. Yet some things taken from Ezekiel are joined with it. Like Isaiah (6: 2), John attributes *six* wings to each ζῶον; but he does not, like him, appropriate two pair for purposes of decency, and only one for flight. Ezekiel (1: 8, 23) gives only *two* pair of wings to his cherubim, one of which covered the waist (1: 11). The discrepancy in John is sufficient to show, that while he drew the material from other sources, in the present case, still he formed and fashioned it after his own model. The whole of the symbolical representation is designedly such, as to make a deep impression of rapidity of movement to any part of the universe; and thus it obviously designates the *ubiquity* of the Godhead. God, seated on his throne, is present everywhere in a moment of time; or, as Ezekiel most significantly expresses it: "The living creatures ran and returned, as the appearance of a flash of lightning;" 1: 14.

Whether anything important, and how much, can be educed from the thrice repeated ἅγιος here, has been and is still disputed. Other passages where mere *intensity* of feeling is expressed in this way, may easily be adduced; e. g. Jer. 22: 29. 7: 4. Ezek. 21: 27. 2 Sam. 18: 33. Is the text before us of the same tenor? Is it like to *ter quaterque beatus?* If it be not, yet the other cases to which reference has been made are so characteristic of Hebrew idiom, that it would be difficult to make out a philological argument for anything more in the present case than *intensity*. The worship of Father, Son, and Spirit, in heaven, is what I sincerely believe in. The book of Revelation, in particular, is full of declarations that the Saviour is worshipped there. But whether we can rest a theological argument for a *Trinity* in the Godhead, on the passage before us, is a different question. I should not be disposed to risk so important a truth, by placing it upon a basis that must be somewhat unstable, or at least somewhat uncertain.

A few other suggestions, at the close of this description of the ζῶα, may not be improper. We have seen that John differs, in his picture, from both his models; and that the ζῶα here are in some respects quite different beings from those in Isaiah and Ezekiel, although in many respects resembling them. This is good evidence, as has been remarked, that the writer is no mere copyist—no slavish imitator. It is evidence also of another thing, which some may regard as more doubtful. It shows that these חַיּוֹת or כְּרוּבִים and ζῶα are not designed to be

(9, 10) And so often as the living creatures give glory, and honour, and thanksgiving to him who sitteth on the throne, to him who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him who sitteth on the throne, and worship him who liveth forever and ever, and cast down their crowns before his throne, saying:

The use of the Futures here, *δώσουσι . . . πεσοῦνται . . . προσκυνήσουσι . . . βαλοῦσι*, has perplexed the grammarians. Ewald (Comm.)

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regarded as actual and veritable living beings, endowed with a particular form, and constituting a real genus or order of rational beings by themselves. Ezekiel gives to each *four* faces, while he makes their bodies upright and human; and he also gives them but *one* foot. John gives to the four the faces respectively which belong to one in Ezekiel, and only *one* face to each; he places their bodies beneath the throne and heads without; and he says nothing of their feet. Ezekiel attributes *four* wings to them, John *six*, and Isaiah six. Ezekiel occupies much of his description with the apparatus of the *wheels* that touch the earth, and move in harmony with the cherubim. Of all this John has nothing, and Isaiah nothing. Indeed the Seraphim of Isaiah do not support the throne, but stand around it, and seem to be quite different beings from the cherubim. John then has mingled views from both prophets with his own; and he has thus made out a description different from either, which preserves a medium between the two. But if Ezekiel's cherubim are to be regarded as veritable beings, like angels, then how could their natures alter so much between his time and that of John? To ask this question is sufficient to show, that cherubim or חַיּוֹת and *ζῶα* are merely *symbols* or *symbolic beings*, not an actual order of angels; they are the creatures of lofty and ardent imagination, struggling for imagery to express its conceptions, and not veritable existences like men or angels.

If the reader is still embarrassed with the idea, that they are represented as leading in the adorations of the heavenly host, and therefore must be really living and rational creatures, he needs but to recollect, that the heavens, the earth, seas, mountains, hills, forests, vapour, rain, snow, hail, etc., are all represented in the Scriptures as *praising* God, and that *prosopopeia* is common throughout the Bible. Once supposing the cherubim or *ζῶα* to be animated beings, it is altogether congruous to suppose, as in the case before us, that they *take the lead* in the worship of heaven; for they are nearest of all to God, and must naturally be supposed to see most of his glory. If doubts still remain, let the reader trace for himself the representations throughout of the cherubim in Ezek. i. and x, and then compare them with those of John. The חַיּוֹת of the former are most clearly the same as the *ζῶα* of the latter. If now *real*, *historical* (~~as the phrase~~ is) existences are designated by each, how have they become so changed between the time of Ezekiel and that of John? The necessary result of this question seems to be that they must be merely *symbolic* beings, modified by the conceptions of different writers, as in the case before us. This admitted, we can account for the fact that cherubim were carved in the most holy place, Ex. 37: 6—9. 25: 17—20. 1 Kings 6: 23—29. 2 Chron. 5: 7, 8; also on the walls of the temple, 1 Kings 6: 29. 2 Chron. 3: 10—13. These were not surely images of *actual* beings; for among a people always inclined to idolatry, they might thus have easily become objects of worship; but they were *symbolical representations designed to teach the ubiquity, omniscience, omnipotence, and ever watchful providence, of the Godhead.*

As *supporters of the throne* on which the Majesty of heaven is seated, they ap-

understands these Futures as used according to the Hebrew idiom, i. e. so as to denote what is often repeated; here, however, as relating to what has been often done. Winer (Gramm. § 41: 6) refers the Fut. to the designation of what is represented as frequently done in the subsequent course of the vision. Lücke, on the other hand, regards it as a designation of a general proposition, so as to mark *what is often and customarily done* in heaven. This last opinion seems plainly to be the true one. One needs only to refer to the Hebrew, in order to find the prototype. Thus in Hebrew the Fut. is often employed in a manner like to that of the present tense, and also very often used in *general* propositions; Heb. Gramm. § 504. *c.* Gesen. Heb. Lehrgeb. § 206. 4. *b.* Ewald Gramm. § 473. 2. *c.* This is exactly the nature of the Futures in the present case. They mark *customary action;* comp. the same idiom in Luke 1: 37. Rom. 3: 30, and elsewhere. This usage is also *classical;* but it seems specially to belong to the Hebrew-Greek; see abundance of classical examples in Kühner, § 446. 2.

Λόξαν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ εὐχαριστίαν, where the *triplex* division in particulars should be noted. Such passages as Is. 6: 3, קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ, may have aided in confirming such a usage. But the number *three* pervades the whole Apocalypse; see Vol. I. § 7.—*Τῷ ζῶντι κ. τ. λ.* = אֶל חַי, only the expression is here made more intensive by adding *εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.*—*Πεσοῦνται* represents the attitude of entire *prostration*, common in all acts of high adoration.—*Πρεσβύτεροι*, see on v. 4 above.—*Προσκυνήσουσι* designates the *homage* paid to God by the act of prostration.—*βαλοῦσι . . . τοῦ θρόνου*, an expression which designates the disclaiming of all honour or homage as due to themselves, and an acknowledgment that all which they have and are is the gift of God. Of course it is a striking expression of deep humility, and of the highest reverence.

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pear in Ps. 18: 10 (11); where in the expression: "He rode upon a *cherub*," the word *cherub* is used generically; a method of employing language too frequent to need any vindication. Mark the congruity of imagery here. John gives them six wings for flight. Ezekiel represents them as moving like a flash of lightning; the Psalmist says: "He rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind;" i. e. with great velocity. All is in perfect congruity, when the passages are viewed in this light. So in 1 Sam. 4: 4, יוֹשֵׁב הַכְּרוּבִים, *sitting enthroned above the Cherubim.*

Once we find the same class of beings employed as the guards of paradise, from which our first parents had been expelled, Gen. 3: 24. Their *vigilance*, designated by their being *filled with eyes*, would seem to indicate a nature appropriate to guardianship. Whether the writer of this passage adopts merely the popular notion of the cherubim here, as a basis for representation, it would be difficult to say. Elsewhere we find them connected only with the throne of the Godhead, or the place of his immediate presence; and this is plainly their appropriate sphere.

(11) Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, and by thy will they came into existence and were created.

The triplex *τὴν δόξαν καὶ τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν* again occurs as before; but here with the *article*, either because of the repetition of the ideas, or rather, because the idea of such glory and honour and power as are appropriate to God, is meant; which is expressed by *the glory*, etc. The meaning is, that these belong exclusively to the Creator of the world.—*Διὰ τὸ θέλημά σου, by thy will;* for that *διά* with the Acc. is not unfrequently employed in such an instrumental sense, may be seen in Rob. Lex. *διά*, II. Winer's Gramm. § 53. c. Kühner's Gramm. § 605 II. *b.* In such cases the sense parallelizes with that of *διά* before the Genitive.—*Ἦσαν* (instead of the vulgate *εἰσί*), a better reading, and better supported than the common one. The words refer to the original rise of visible creation.—*Ἐκτίσθησαν* merely explains and renders more intensive the affirmation.—In the use of *ἔκτισας* here, we have an example of the Aorist used for the Perfect, i. e. used to designate *completed* action in time past; see N. Test. Gramm. § 136. 5. 3. But this is common everywhere.

The reader may find similar ascriptions of a striking character in Enoch 9: 3, 4. 39: 9—12. 60: 9—16. Ascens. Is. 7: 15. 8: 17, 18 (Trinity). 10: 1—6. Glory to God as the *Creator* of all things, is frequent in the Scriptures; see Ps. 148: 5. 104: 2. 33: 8, 9 al.

Thus concludes this magnificent exordium to the principal Visions of the book. Chap. v. is intimately connected with it, but it is rather to be regarded as a special proem to chap. vi—xi, than as a proem to the book at large. The impressive nature of the scene presented in chap. iv, cannot but strike the mind of every intelligent reader. The holy Seer was duly prepared, by such an august vision, for the disclosures which follow; and the mind of the reader can hardly fail to be prepared, also, to look for them with deep interest. It cannot escape even the most unobserving, how greatly this whole scene resembles the inaugural theophanies in Is. vi. and Ezek. i. The writer now forthwith *rapit in medias res.* But the preparation for his development is peculiar, and therefore needs some general statement in the way of explanation.

CHAPTER V.

The sealed book.

Previous to the disclosures about to be made, a book appears in the hand of Him who sits upon the throne, sealed with seven seals, so that no one can inspect its contents. The counsels of heaven which are as yet *secret*, are evidently symbolized by this sealed book. No one is found in heaven or on earth, who can open and read the book. The seer is deeply affected because of this; but he is encouraged by one of the twenty-four elders to expect, that the Messiah will disclose its contents. As a Lamb that had been slain the Messiah makes his appearance, with indications at the same time, by the symbol of horns and eyes, of his omnipotence and omniscience. He advances to the throne, and takes the book from the hand of him who sat upon it, as the signal that he is about to open it and disclose its contents. The twenty-four elders surrounding the throne now prostrate themselves before him, and offer unto him ascriptions of praise and thanksgiving. With these the angels and the living creatures unite in a hymn of praise; which is finally echoed and re-echoed from the most distant parts of the universe.

The reason why a *book* is chosen for the symbol in this case, will be very apparent to a careful reader of the Hebrew Scriptures. In respect to the *book of life*, see the remarks on Rev. 3: 5. This book has a limited signification, and is employed only in respect to the state of individuals, whose weal or woe, life or death, depends on what is recorded therein. But in the present case, the book before us contains a record of the secret counsels of God, i. e. hitherto secret, in regard to the Christian church and its enemies. Texts which make use of the like imagery may be found in Mal. 3: 16. Ps. 139: 16, and probably Deut. 32: 34.

The seven seals put upon this book, show that its contents were not designed to be read by any, except by him who had authority and power to break the seals. So in Dan. 8: 26. 12: 4, 9, the prophet seals up what is to be disclosed only at a future time. In Is. 8: 16, the prediction which had just been written and uttered, is required to be "bound up and sealed," that no change may be made in it. But in the case before us the *seals* have a different import, being designed to exclude perusal. The general idea is, that none but the Messiah, ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τοῦ πατρός, is capable of revealing the secret counsels of God. He knows them all, and therefore is able to disclose them.

The *extent* and *special design* of this sealed volume or book begin their development with chap. vi.; and there, consequently, will be the most proper place for the discussion of the subjects appropriate to them. For the general outline of the plan of the book, the reader is referred to the Introduction, Vol. I. § 10.

(1) And I saw, upon the right hand of him who was sitting on the throne, a book written within and upon the back, sealed with seven seals.

Καί—transitions, such as is here made, and indeed even the most striking ones, from one scene to another, are for the most part marked in this book merely by *καί*; see 12: 1. 12: 18. 14: 1. 15: 1. 17: 1. 19: 11. 20: 1. 20: 11. 21: 1. 22: 6. A natural solution of this is found by comparing it with the Hebrew idiom, (as I have before suggested),

where still greater transitions are made by וְ, viz., the passing from one book to another; and even independent books sometimes commence with וְ; see Ex. 1: 1. Lev. 1: 1. Num. 1: 1. Josh. 1: 1. Judg. 1: 1. 1 Sam. 1: 1. 2 Sam. 1: 1. 1 Kings 1: 1. 2 Kings 1: 1. Ezek. 1: 1. Ruth 1: 1. Esth. 1: 1. Ezra 1: 1. 2 Chron. 1: 1. The assertion of even recent grammarians and lexicographers, that the particle וְ *always* and necessarily implies *preceding* matter with which it is connected, is thus shown to be groundless. In such cases as the above, וְ (= *καί*) must merely influence the meaning of the verb connected with it, or at most convey a sense like to that of our peculiar *transitive* particle *now*, and sometimes like to that of the particle *then*. So in the Apocalypse, *καί then;* and so, indeed, oftentimes in parts of historic narration in the N. Testament; but in the Apocalypse the transitions marked by *καί* are unusually great. Yet, after all, they do not equal those of the Hebrew וְ; as the above examples fully demonstrate.

Ἐπί, *on, upon*, not properly *in*, although our idiom expresses the idea in this way. It might be rendered *at* or *near*, were it not that v. 7 shows the book to have been *on* or *in* the hand, and not simply *at* or *near by* the right hand.—*Βιβλίον*, in form is a diminutive of *βίβλος*, yet not generally used in a diminutive sense in the N. Testament. The diminutive is *βιβλαρίδιον*, Rev. 10: 9. The form of the *βιβλίον*, certainly the usual form, was that of a manuscript-roll; see Luke 4: 17, where the Saviour is spoken of as *ἀναπτύξας τὸ βιβλίον, unrolling the book*, viz. the volume of Isaiah the prophet. Ewald objects to the idea of a *scroll* or *roll* here, and maintains that there were seven separate *libelli* rolled in succession around a piece of wood in the centre, the first of which was the longest, and the rest successively shorter; so that the seals on the margin of the outside leaf might be seen by John. But what significance then has *ἔσωθεν* and *ὄπισθεν*? Besides, there would then be seven *βίβλια* instead of one. Plainly the model is to be found in Ezek. 2: 9, 10, where the prophets speaks of "a roll of a book . . . written within and without," i. e. on both sides of the Ms., as was usual when there was a great press of matter; see Pliny, De Veterum Opistographis, Epist. III. 5. If the writing on the backside was discontinued but a short distance from the outer extreme end of the parchment, all the writing upon the Ms. would of course be covered or concealed, when it was rolled up.

Κατεσφραγισμένον κ. τ. λ. Sealed with seven seals of course means completely, entirely, or perfectly sealed up. But here it also means somewhat more. The seals are disposed of in such a way, that they are successively broken, and different parts of the *βιβλίον* disclosed in succession. Eichhorn speaks of the seven seals as all put upon the outer edge of the Ms. when rolled up. But how then could any part of

the roll be read, until the whole were broken? To make all parts of the description congruous, we must suppose the roll to have a seal upon the extreme end that was last rolled up, which would of course prevent its being unrolled. When the first seal was broken, the Ms. could be unrolled, until one came to a second seal; and so in succession of the rest. Now if these seals were put on so as to be visible at the ends of the roll, (which might be easily done by some small label attached to each seal indicative of its place), then John could have seen the seven seals, if the end of the roll was toward him, i. e. he could have at least seen what indicated their presence. But how can all the demands of this representation be answered, either by the supposition of Eichhorn or of Ewald? If, however, we suppose the seals to be put *successively* upon the margin of the book or scroll, as it was rolled up, each opening would extend only so far as the next seal, where the unrolling would be arrested; and the presence of these seals might in some way have been indicated to a beholder, as has already been suggested.

(2) And I saw a mighty angel, proclaiming with a loud voice: Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

Ἰσχυρόν, "merum epitheton ornans," says Eichhorn. But how it is *ornans*, in the present instance, I wot not, unless there is something apposite in it to the nature of the case. Homer represents his heralds as powerful, robust men, in order consistently to attribute to them deep-toned and powerful voices. Is not this the design of the epithet *ἰσχυρόν* here? The writer immediately subjoins: *κηρύσσοντα ἐν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ*. The adjective *μεγάλῃ*, when applied to *voice*, must of course mean *loud*.

Τίς ἄξιος κ. τ. λ. The quotation of the words is *direct*, (as usual elsewhere), and the whole phrase forms the requisite complement to the participle *κηρύσσοντα*.—*Ἄξιος* in the sense of *suitable, well adapted to*, or more probably with the meaning, *of sufficient rank* or *dignity*, i. e. who by his rank or attributes deserves the honour of opening this book of divine decrees?—*Καὶ λῦσαι κ. τ. λ.* is added for the sake of specification. *Seven seals* had been mentioned. Some special guard is implied, therefore, against the reading of this book. It could not be fully read, unless they were all successively broken; and to this the expression before us refers.

(3) And no one in heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth, was able to open the book, or to inspect it.

Heaven, earth, and the under-world, by the common usus loquendi of the Hebrews, denote *the universe;* q. d. 'no being in the universe could be found, who was able to open the book, and survey its contents.' Of course the meaning is, that no one could be found among created beings, who was competent to perform this task.—*Ἀνὼ* is inserted after

οὐρανῷ here in several critical editions, but omitted by Hahn. The idea of heaven among the Hebrews was, that it is the region immediately above the apparent welkin or sky. *Later* Hebrew usage made seven heavens; indeed, the Ascension of Isaiah, (cotemporary with the Apocalypse), makes seven; but I find no traces of this in the O. or N. Testament.—*Ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς*, see the popular idea of the subterranean region fully developed in Is. xiv. The שְׁאוֹל of the Hebrews, and the *Ἅιδης* of the Greeks, both designate the *under-world* in its usual sense, as employed in popular language.

Ἀνοῖξαι refers to breaking the seals of the book; *βλέπειν* to the *inspection* of its contents. *Βλέπω* is not confined merely to the *ocular* sense, but occasionally is employed to designate the mental one of seeing or considering. So Soph. Oed. Tyr. v. 740. The first two examples of *οὐδέ* here are the proper sequences of the previous negative in *οὐδείς* implied before *ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ*; the *οὐδέ* before *βλέπειν* is dependent also upon the first *οὐδείς* in the verse; see N. Test. Gramm. § 183. 1.

(4) And I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the book, nor to inspect it.

Πολλά neut. plur. used adverbially, as often. *Ἄξιος* in the same sense as above.

(5) Then one of the elders saith to me: Weep not; behold! the lion of the tribe of Judah, the offspring of David, hath prevailed to open the book and the seals thereof.

Εἷς = אֶחָד, which is sometimes used, in the later Hebrew, as being equivalent to *τίς*, i. e. *one, some one, a certain one;* see Ges. Lex.—*Λέγει* the *Present* of narration, i. e. the historical Present.—*Ἐνίκησεν* has an intensive meaning here. It does not merely signify, that the Messiah was able to open the book, but that he had acquired this power by a victorious struggle. Comp. a similar sentiment in Phil. 2: 6—10. By such a struggle with trials and sorrows, he had opened or prepared the way for the highest honour to be bestowed upon him, i. e. he had won by his victories the honour and the right to open the sealed book.

Ὁ λέων, the emblem of *heros fortissimus*, inasmuch as the lion is the king of beasts, in consequence of his strength and invincible courage; comp. Jer. 4: 7. *The lion of God* is an epithet among the Arabians, for an invincible hero.—*Ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰούδα*, because Christ sprung from the tribe of Judah (Heb. 7: 14); and with reference, also, to the declaration of the dying Jacob respecting Judah, Gen. 49: 9, where *lion* is used in a sense like to that which it has in the verse before us. That *λέων* is the subject of *ἐνίκησε*, is proof that it has the meaning just assigned to it.—*Ἡ ῥίζα Δαυίδ*, not *root* of David, but a *root-shoot* from the

trunk or stem of David; comp. חֹטֶר מִגֵּזַע יִשָׁי, *a root-shoot* or *sprout from the trunk of Jesse*, Is. 11: 1, to which the clause before us undoubtedly refers. How familiar the Old Testament Scriptures were to the author of the Apocalypse, must be evident to every attentive reader. Here a plain reference to two distinct texts widely separated, is comprised in a very narrow compass. See the like image respecting the Messiah, in 4 Ezra 12: 31, 32.

(6) And I saw between the throne and the four living creatures, and between the elders, a Lamb standing, as it were slain, having seven heads and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that are sent into all the earth.

Lit. *ἐν μέσῳ* means *in the middle* [space]. Plainly the writer means to say, in the space between the throne of God, borne up by the four *ζῶα*, and the twenty-four elders who sat in a semi-circular form around it; a most appropriate station for the performance of what the sequel discloses. The *repetition* of *ἐν μέσῳ* is a Hebrew idiom. The Hebrews in such a case often say: בֵּין . . . וּבֵין; see Gen. 1: 7. Lev. 27: 12.

Ἀρνίον, properly a diminutive, *agnellus*, from *ἀρήν*, Gen. *ἀρνός*; yet, like *βιβλίον* above, not employed in a sense actually diminutive. It designates, as it were, a *tender lamb*, a *young innocent lamb*, in its primary sense; and so is used by John, and applied to the Saviour, about thirty times in the Apocalypse; and, therefore, is to be regarded as a favourite appellation, indicative of two things, viz. perfect innocence, and propitiatory sacrifice or victim. Comp. the source of this in the exclamation of John the Baptist, John 1: 29, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!" It would seem probable, that John the evangelist was present, when this was said; see John 1: 35, 36. It is true the word *ἀμνός* is here used; but this makes no appreciable difference. The Septuagint uses both *ἀρνίον* and *ἀμνός* for the Hebrew כֶּבֶשׂ; and the evangelist himself employs *ἀρνίον* in 21: 15. So in Testamentum XII. Patriarcharum (Fabric.) I. p. 724, 725, 730, *ἀμνὸς θεοῦ* is used for the Messiah. In 1 Pet. 1: 19. Acts. 8: 32, it is used in reference to the passage in Is. 53: 7. Otherwise, the use of it in the New Testament is appropriate and peculiar to John.

Ὡς ἐσφαγμένον, *as slain*, i. e. wearing the marks, or bearing the appearance, of having been slain; where the *propitiatory* design in the employment of the appellation *lamb* exhibits itself; comp. *ὡς ἐσφαγμένον*, in 13: 3, as to the meaning of *ὡς* here. In what way this appearance of *having been slain* developed itself, whether in the apparent marks of wounds, or of blood, the writer does not say; nor is it important that he should. Enough, in a description which is altogether *symbolic*, that he gives the leading traits, without stopping to note the particular manner in which they were developed.

Ἑπτὰ κέρατα, *seven horns*, the horn being the common emblem of *power* in the Hebrew Scriptures; see Ps. 112: 9. 75: 10. 89: 17. 148: 14. 132: 17. Comp. also Dan. 7: 7, 8, 20, 24. 8: 3, 8, 9, 20, 21; and see also Rev. 13: 1. That the number *seven* here means *complete*, seems obvious, both from the nature of the case, and also of the number. But that in itself the expression, *seven horns*, would denote *omnipotence*, seems not to be correct, inasmuch as the beast in Rev. 13: 1 has even a still greater number of horns; and so of some of the examples cited above from the book of Daniel. The other attributes ascribed to the Lamb do indeed make him *Lord of all;* but the expression itself of *seven horns* must be regarded as simply designating the idea of *great power*. This also stands connected and harmonizes well with λέων and ἐνίκησε above. With the measure of power designated by *seven horns*, he might well be compared to a *lion*, and ἐνίκησε be reasonably expected of him.

Ὀφθαλμοὺς ἑπτά of course means *acute* and *wide-reaching vision*. —Οἵ εἰσι . . . τὴν γῆν. Is the meaning, that these seven eyes are indicative of his *own* attributes? Or are they symbols of that power which he possesses, of sending abroad over all the earth the seven spirits before his throne, in order that they may inspect and oversee the affairs of his kingdom? There is some difficulty in the present case; because the seven horns seem plainly to denote the Messiah's attribute of mighty power. Yet in Rev. 3: 1, it seems to be equally plain, that the seven spirits are the *seven presence-angels;* for there the Redeemer is said ἔχειν, *to have* or *hold* them at his disposal, in the same manner as he has at his disposal the *seven stars*, i. e. the angels of the churches. Indeed, in all the instances brought under review, in the remarks made on 3: 1, the case is the same, if we except the present one, which is at least somewhat doubtful. In order, however, that congruity of representation should be preserved, we seem to be constrained here to regard the seven eyes as symbols of the all-pervading survey or perspicacity of the Saviour himself; especially as we are obliged here to acknowledge a reference to Zech. 3: 9 and 4: 10, where the seven eyes, engraved upon the corner-stone of the new temple, are plainly symbolic of "the eyes of Jehovah which run to and fro through the whole earth," i. e. God is ὁ παντόπτης, *omnituens*. Plainly τὰ ἀπεσταλμένα εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν, is a translation of the phrase in Zech. 4: 10, חֵמָּה מְשׁוֹטְטִים בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ, *these run to and fro through the whole earth*. With this passage before us, which in Zech. is so plain, we cannot well withhold our assent to the proposition, that the writer here means to designate Christ as ὁ παντόπτης or *omnituens;* comp. Rev. 2: 18.*

* As to the *method* in which John disposed of the seven horns and seven eyes, i. e. in what manner or how they were inserted; whether each eye was at the

(7) And he came and took the book from the right hand of him who sat upon the throne.

. Simple and majestic, without any pomp of words, or any effort to decorate the scene.—*Εἴληφε*, Perf. joined with an Aor. (*ἦλθε*); as often in narration, N. Test. Gramm. § 136. 3. But here the Perf. has simply an *aoristic* sense, which is very unusual; see Gramm. § 136. 3. *b.* Note.

But how could a *Lamb* take the book? Was it only the *head*, in this case, which bore the resemblances to a lamb designated in the sixth verse, the rest of the person remaining simply human? This would seem to destroy at least the *congruity* of the image, and to make something monstrous, like Centaurs, etc. Was the appearance of a lamb, then, *exchanged* for the simple human form, when he advanced to take the book? This would at least appear more probable than the other supposition; yet of this the writer has given us no express intimation.*

root of each horn, and in what order the horns stood in relation to each other; of all this the author himself has said nothing, and to indulge in conjecture with confidence would be worse than useless. Symbolic representations of this nature do indeed demand some *congruity* and *appropriateness;* but then, as the writer goes designedly into the region of imagination for images to express his thoughts, we must not limit him to the mere realities of our natural world, nor pronounce all that to be incongruous, which does not agree with those realities in all its parts. The *mirificum* we may well admit; the *monstrosum* would be another question. If one is disposed to conjecture, he may suppose double horns in the common place upon the sides of the head, and three in the centre; and so of the eyes. But it would be useless to make conjectures of this nature, as the significancy of the symbols is not in any degree affected by them.

* Nearly every commentary that I have seen keeps a guarded silence in relation to the apparent difficulty here. It does not even seem as if most interpreters had once entertained the thought that there was any difficulty. Herder, Ewald, and Vitringa are the only critics whom I have found doing so much as to notice it. Of these the former says: "We see the images are *symbols;* and we must not unreasonably dwell upon individual traits, nor inquire (for example): How did the Lamb stand? How did he take the book? Where were his eyes? The images of the Revelation have a *meaning;* and in the connection of that meaning must we follow them;" Maran Atha, p. 54. Ewald says: "Non quaerimus [de loco oculorum], imaginum delineationem exactam et congruam non esse scrutandam reputantes;" p. 145 Comm. The spirit of this remark he means doubtless to apply also to the case before us. Vitringa commences his remarks with an observation true enough: "Sicco pede *passim* praeteriunt hic Interpretes difficultatem." He then goes on to compare the present case with that of the ζῶα in chap. iv, which, as he avers, had each a *human body*, while only the *head* and *feet* resembled the respective animals to which they are compared. But in this he is surely mistaken; for their bodies are represented as being *under* the throne; which could not be said of human bodies, as it would imply a *prostrate* condition. Besides, how are the *four* feet of the lion and the ox to be joined to the human body?

(8) And when he took the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having harps and golden bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

The acts of adoration and praise here mentioned are commenced by those who are *nearest* to the throne of God, viz., by the four living crea-

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And in the present case, how are the *four* feet of a *lamb* to be given to him whose body was *human?* This makes an impossible image. Vitringa has evidently confounded the representation of Ezekiel with that of John. In Ezekiel the writer attributes to the living creatures *hands*, 1: 8, and an upright foot (v. 7), like to that of a bullock, so that it could easily turn in every direction; and in such a case, beyond a doubt the body is conceived of as upright and *human*. Accordingly, we find the living creatures standing under the divine throne, which rests upon their *heads*, Ezek. 1: 22, 26. Here nothing is unnatural, save the extraordinary mixed forms both in the head and feet. But in John (Rev. iv.), the *bodies* are placed *under* the throne; and of course neither human feet nor human bodies can be supposed by the writer. In the case before us, we cannot unite the *feet* of a lamb to a human body. We must therefore suppose merely the head to bear a resemblance to the Lamb; or else we must suppose the whole form to be like one, and that arms were attached to the sides or breast, (like the *wings* and *hands* in Ezekiel's vision); or else make the supposition, that the form was changed, and a human form resumed, when the Saviour advanced to take the book and open it. It is not a sufficient justification of the first of these suppositions, that there is a mingling of different forms, both in Ezek. i. and Rev. iv, in the constitution of the living creatures; for these are plainly beings of merely a *symbolic* nature, and τὶ παράδοξον may be reasonably allowed. But there would be something repulsive to taste, in such a mixture of forms here, where the symbol represents the glorious Redeemer.—Nor is the second supposition, (one which Vitringa also makes), adapted to reconcile our feelings much better than the first. Here is still *quoddam monstrosum*. Arms attached to a *lamb*, are at least a very unusual appendage; and we cannot but feel, that there is something unnatural and excessive in imagery of such a nature.

Shall we suppose then, that the Lamb took the book in his *mouth*, or with his *feet?* This would be a degradation of the whole representation: for it is so much against the order of nature, that we cannot help being revolted at it. Shall we suppose then, that the form under which the Saviour first appears in the august assembly of heaven, to the mental vision of John, was changed when he advanced to take the book? This relieves the incongruity of the matter, which strikes us when viewed in any other light; and the only difficulty here is, that the Seer has himself given no express notice of such a change. But does not what he says *imply* it? It would really seem to be so, to say the least. But Ewald suggests, that the Saviour bears this same image of a lamb, in all his subsequent developments, until he marches forth as a conqueror, at the head of his great army, Rev. 19: 11. The only ground, however, of this opinion is, that the epithet ἀρνίον is so frequently given to him in the Apocalypse. An obvious reason, in the case before us, for his appearance as a *lamb*, is given in v. 9, *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood*, etc. But surely when Christ appears at the head of his great army, Rev. 14: 1, although he is called ἀρνίον, it would not seem to be very appropriate to suppose that the Apocalyptist saw him, on that occasion, in the *form* of a lamb. In most of the other cases where Christ is called *lamb*,

tures, who bear up the throne; then continued by the twenty-four elders, who stand near the throne.—*Ἔχοντες ἕκαστος*, *each one having*, where the plural Part. agrees with the singular *ἕκαστος* (as often elsewhere), because in its nature this word is *generic*. So in Heb. כּל־אחד, *each one*, more usually has the plural joined with it.—But is it the *ζῶα* who have *harps*, etc., or the twenty-four elders? The *latter*, in the present case, as *ἠγόρασας ἡμᾶς* in v. 9, seems clearly and necessarily to indicate. *Ἔχοντες*, therefore, is to be applied only to the nearest Nominative or subject.

Φιάλας, *bowls* or *goblets*, having more breadth than depth; to which species of vessel our word *vial*, as now employed, does not at all correspond. Evidently *a vessel with a broad mouth* or *opening* is designated; for the incense is to be burned in it for the sake of diffusing over the place the sweet odour which it would yield.—*Αἵ εἰσιν αἱ προσευχαὶ τῶν ἁγίων*, i. e. which incense symbolizes the prayers of the saints that ascend up before God.

The object of the *harps* (comp. 14: 2. 15: 2) is evidently to accompany and aid the song of praise. What was symbolized by the *incense* in

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there is a simple reference to the name *ἀρνίον*, as applied with so much significancy in chap. v.

After all, we cannot *determine* the case before us with certainty. To my own mind, the *change of form*, so that it would be appropriate to the actions related in the sequel, seems to be most congruous, and to be attended with the least difficulty, I mean, of course, with the least *æsthetical* difficulty; for as to the main sentiment, it would not be changed by either mode of representation; so that one might be tempted to put the consideration of it aside, and adopt the words and sentiments of Herder and Ewald. But after all, it is not pleasant for the reader to retreat from the contemplation of this picture, with the feeling that there is something of the *monstrous*, or of the *unnatural*, or of the *impossible*, or at least of the *incongruous*, in it. It makes us less willing to listen to the writer, and gives us less confidence in his taste and judgment. On this account, I have endeavoured to examine the subject somewhat minutely, and not to pass it *sicco pede*, as Vitringa says most have done. That there is a very impressive symbol comprised in the idea of a *slain lamb*, every reader must instinctively feel, when he reads v. 9. Indeed, I know not how else, (looking back to the Jewish passover-lamb), the writer could have chosen a symbol adapted to make so deep an impression. Shall we now throw all this away, or condemn it as in bad taste, merely because the author, in the overpowering vision of such a scene, has not stopped to describe minute particulars, which would enable us to make out more rhetorical congruity in his exhibition? I think this would not be candid criticism. What hinders us, where all is *vision* and *symbol*, from supposing such changes in forms proffered to vision, as the nature of the case respectively demands? If we may do so without any violence or impropriety, (and why may we not?) then may we suppose, that when a book is represented as being *taken* and *read*, this is and must of course be done by an appropriate *human* form, and not by that of a *lamb*, at least of a lamb as understood to mean (in respect even to *form*) what the *literal* sense of this word conveys.

the temple of old, seems to be plainly brought to view here. As the perfume yielded by incense, when burned, diffuses a sweet odour over all the place where it is offered, and ascends upward towards heaven; so prayer, when directed to God, ascends upwards, and when sincerely offered is well-pleasing to Him to whom it is directed. So Ps. 141: 2, "Let my prayer come before thee *as incense.*" The passage before us is the only one, where the redeemed themselves in heaven are represented as offering the incense which is the symbol of the prayers of the saints. And here, it would seem that the incense is not to be regarded as a symbol of the prayers offered by the saints *on earth;* as some have maintained. Ewald understands it as a symbol of the prayers of the offerers themselves; just as the *harps* are a symbol of the praises of those who employed them. So Vitringa. And as to ἁγίων, it may, without any difficulty, be as well applied to saints in heaven as on earth; it is even more appropriate to them.

In Rev. 8: 3, 4, is a passage which represents an angel as having a golden censer filled with incense, and as offering up this before God "with the prayers of all the saints." This, as I apprehend, has plainly a different meaning, in some respects, from the clause now before us, inasmuch as it represents him as an *interceding* angel, presenting, in behalf of the persecuted church on earth, their supplications before God. At all events, the idea of *angel-intercessors,* in the sense now stated, was a common one among the Jews, at the time when the Apocalypse was written. For the full exhibition and proof of this, I must refer the reader to Exc. I. under the head *Good Angels,* No. 6.

In the present case, then, as the harps are an emblem of the praise which those who employed them offered to God, so the *bowls filled with incense* are an emblem of the prayers which were offered up to God in behalf of his church and kingdom, in the temple above. On earth the priests in the temple always took the lead in worship; the people at a distance from the most holy place followed on, in obedience to the signal which was given them. *The offering of incense* was a signal for prayer; see Luke 1: 10, which is direct to this point. So in the present case. The ζῶα and the elders begin the adoration; the angels at a greater distance echo it, vs. 11, 12; all the distant parts of the universe (or perhaps the angels who preside over them), re-echo it, v. 13; so that there is one general, or rather universal, chorus on this occasion—a chorus of all intelligent and holy beings.

Such being the simple and (I may add) magnificent view of the writer, it seems to be unnecessary here to be solicitous about minute details; such as, 'How could they play on harps, which require the use of *both* hands, while in one hand they held the bowls of incense? How could they play on harps, burn incense, sing, and pray, all at the same

time?' We might answer, indeed, that the writer does not affirm, nor even intimate this. They could, at all events, sing and play at one time; as the worshippers in the temple did on earth. They could offer prayers and burn incense at another; as was done in the temple on earth. And this is all the writer means, and all which he expects his readers to understand. But after all, it is no very difficult thing to suppose all these to be done at one and the same time. The incense-bowls are placed, when ignited, on the altar of incense; the harps accompany the hymns, and the hymns are themselves (as hymns often are) in part *supplications* to God, as well as praise. As the redeemed in heaven are kings and *priests* to God, the offering of incense is surely an *appropriate* duty. The writer, therefore, has offended neither against good taste, nor the laws of congruity; but, on the contrary, he has given us a truly magnificent picture of what he means to describe.

If any one is still disposed to ask: Whether *prayer* in heaven is an *appropriate* exercise? The answer is easy. He may be referred to Rev. 6: 10. Why should the blessed before the throne of glory, cease to feel as deep, yea even a deeper, interest than formerly in the prosperity of the church?

(9, 10) And they sing a new song, saying: Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and hast made them kings and priests to our God, and they shall reign over the earth.

Ἄιδουσιν, they sing, Pres. for the Aor. of narration, or the historic Present.—*ὨΙδὴν καινήν, a new song;* not with Schleusner and others, *an excellent song*. All the songs of heaven we may well suppose to be excellent. But a *new* song is such an one as a new occasion of praise and thanksgiving calls forth; comp. Ps. 33: 3. 40: 3. 96: 1. 98: 1. 144: 9. 149: 1. Is. 42: 10. *Thou art worthy to take the book*, etc., shows the ground of the *newness* of the song. It was appropriate to a *new* occasion. Whatever may be done by imperfect worshippers on earth, in heaven, it would seem, their worship is not *uniform* in matter or manner. New occasions call forth *new* songs, and doubtless *new* supplications also.

Ὅτι ἐσφάγης, from *σφάσσω* (old root *σφάγω*), in the 2 Aor. passive. Comp. as to the sense of the word, *ὡς ἐσφαγμένον* in v. 6: The reference is to the paschal lamb, which was slain at the feast of the passover, and its blood sprinkled on the door posts, that the destroying angel might pass by, Ex. xii; comp. 1 Cor. 5: 7. As the sacrifice of the first paschal lamb procured redemption or deliverance from the plague which smote and destroyed the Egyptians, so did the sacrifice of the Lamb of God procure eternal redemption for his people, or "take away the sins of the world."—*Ἀγοράζω, to buy, purchase*, means also *to*

ransom or *redeem*, because, for example, slaves were ransomed from bondage, and the condemned from execution, by the payment of a price which was accepted in lieu of their bondage or punishment. So here; the slaves of sin and Satan, those who lay under the sentence of the divine law and were condemned to the second death, were *bought off* or *redeemed* by the blood of Christ, in order that they should be the freed-men of the Lord, 1 Cor. 7: 22, 23. Comp. also 1 Cor. 6: 20. 2 Pet. 2: 1. Rev. 14: 3, 4. The metaphor is easy and obvious. It is fully developed in 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19, "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish or without spot."

Τῷ θεῷ, Dat. *commodi*, as the grammarians say, i. e. bought *for him, on his account*, that he might possess us as his freed-men and obedient children.—*Ἐν τῷ αἵματί σου, by thy blood;* not, then, simply because he had instructed them, or been the *light* of the world; not merely because he had set them a perfect example, and urged them to walk in his steps; not merely because he had sealed the truths which he had taught, by a martyr's death; all these might indeed belong to the circle of action in which, as the Redeemer of our race, the Lord Jesus would move. They did belong to it; and they are delightful truths, and of deep interest. But there is a truth which ranks still higher; and this is, that Christ was our *passover-sacrifice;* our *propitiatory offering;* and thus, that "Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." It is not merely the light which he diffused, nor his example, nor his martyrdom as a faithful witness—but HIS BLOOD which redeems our lost race from their bondage and their perishing state, and makes them free and "alive to God." Let the reader carefully compare with the sentiment here, Matt. 26: 28. 20: 28. John 10: 11. Eph. 1: 7. Acts 20: 28. Col. 1: 14. Heb. 9: 11—14. 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19. Gal. 3: 13. 1 John 1: 7. Is. 53: 5—10; which, however, are only a few of the numerous texts of the like import. If there be any such thing as a central point to Christianity considered as a religion distinct from all others, it seems to be the doctrine here brought to view by our text. No wonder that it should call forth the rapturous praise and adoration of all the heavenly world, when the Lord of glory presented himself in a form which was an emblem of the atoning sacrifice which he had made, and made as the Redeemer of our perishing race!

Φυλή means *tribe*, i. e. a comparatively small division or class of people associated together; e. g. the *tribes* of Israel.—*Γλῶσσα*, lit. *tongue, dialect*, i. e. the peculiar dialect of a small part of a numerous people; and so it marks a division or national distinction here rising somewhat above that designated by *φυλή*. This usage is of Hebrew origin; Is. 66: 18. Dan. 3: 4, 7. 4: 1. 7: 14.—*Λαός, populus*, spoken

of a multitude *en masse*, who are associated together as a nation, an army, etc., in distinction from δῆμος, *the people* as freemen assembled in the forum, etc. Here it designates a larger mass of people than is signified by the preceding words.—Ἔθνος, the *people* in a still wider extent, a large nation. In Hebrew, עַם usually means the *Hebrew nation*, and גּוֹי or גּוֹיִם *the Gentile nations*. The four words conjoined here designate nations of every kind, from the smallest to the greatest; and of course imply that redemption has been extended to Gentile as well as Jew.

Καὶ ἐποίησας κ. τ. λ., see on 1: 6.—Καὶ βασιλεύσουσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. *Who* shall reign? Answer: The redeemed of every tribe, etc. *How* shall they reign? The answer is not given here; but it is implied in Rev. 11: 17. 20: 4—6. Comp. 2: 26, 27. 3: 21. 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3. Matt. 19: 28. Is it a visible reign on earth, i. e. a reign of those who themselves dwell on the earth; or is it a participation in the glories and exaltation of the Redeemer, when his kingdom shall become universal? Probably the latter; see on Rev. 20: 4—6.

One difficulty still remains. In v. 9 we have ἠγόρασας . . . ἡμᾶς, *us*, first pers. plural; in v. 10 we have (according to the corrected text), καὶ ἐποίησας αὐτούς, *them*, third pers. plural: and so again, βασιλεύσουσιν, third pers. plural. The vulgate text reads ἡμᾶς for αὐτούς, and βασιλεύομεν for βασιλεύσουσιν, thus preserving the *first* pers. plural throughout. But the weight of authority seems to be against this; and it is rejected in the late critical editions. Thus constituted, there appears to be a serious discrepancy between v. 9 and v. 10, scarcely consistent with the supposition that the same speakers utter both. Ewald, being unable to solve the difficulty, proposes to expunge the ἡμᾶς of v. 9, and to read: ἠγόρασας . . . ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς κ. τ. λ., i. e. thou hast redeemed . . . [some] of every tribe, etc. This is not an impossible sense; for ἐκ (like מִן of the Hebrews) is frequently used in such a way in the N. Testament, see Lex. ἐκ, 3. *h*. But still, as there is no authority thus to change the text, it is better to choose some other method, if we may do so, of solving the difficulty. The ἡμᾶς of v. 9 evidently includes all Christians, at least all in heaven; for the twenty-four elders, and only they, could not surely belong to *every* tribe and tongue. If the text then, as it now stands, be correct, we must suppose that the first person plural is dropped at the end of v. 9, and that αὐτούς in v. 10 is referred by the speakers to φυλῆς, γλώσσης, κ. τ. λ.; i. e. thou hast made every tribe, etc., to be kings and priests. Of course the meaning must be limited to such as were, or were to be, *actually* redeemed; we must not apply it numerically to every individual of each tribe. The sentiment then is, that Christians of all nations shall yet reign on the earth or over the earth; a sentiment like to that in other passages referred to above.

There is still another method of solving the difficulties of the amended text, which I have not found in any of the commentaries. It is that of *responsive* praise. In Ps. xxiv. there is a plain example of the like composition; so also in Is. 6: 1—3. If now in the present case we suppose the first clause in v. 9—"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof"—to be sung by both the ζῶα and the elders; then the following clause, to the end of v. 9, by the elders alone; then v. 10 by the ζῶα again as a response; in this way all difficulty vanishes. I do not aver that such was the intention of the writer; but surely there is nothing improbable in it, either from the nature of the case, or when compared with other examples. Besides; in v. 11, there is an echo of the praise begun; and in v. 13 this is reëchoed again by a still greater multitude. There is no critical heresy, therefore, in such a view of the case; although I have no serious difficulty with the preceding solution.

(11) And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and of the living creatures, and of the elders; and their number was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

Κύκλῳ τοῦ θρονοῦ. Plainly the intention of the writer is, that we should regard *the great multitude of angels*, as standing around the throne in a circle *external* to that of the twenty-four elders; who are also said *to sit round the throne*, 4: 4. The *redeemed*, then, who are comprehended with the twenty-four elders, (for these are the leaders or representatives of the redeemed), stand next to the presence-angels; and the *many angels* are ranged beyond these, i. e. in the outer circle. Can any *incongruity* be objected to this view of the writer? I think not. "Are they [the angels] not *ministering* spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation? Heb. 1: 14. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. 6: 3. For *angels* no redeeming blood has been shed, Heb. 2: 16, 17. Why then may we not rationally suppose that the redeemed will enjoy a high preëminence, since they have been ransomed at such an infinite expense?

As to the *number* of the angels here, it is plainly taken from Dan. 7: 10, "Thousand thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." But in our text, the *order* of the numbers is reversed. It is plain enough that these numbers are thus repeated, in order to designate the idea of *countless* number, or at least of an *exceedingly great* one. The general chorus that follows, is contained in the next verse.

(12) Saying with a loud voice: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Λέγοντες agrees with *ὁ ἀριθμός* a noun of multitude, or with *μυριάδες* and *χιλιάδες* by a *constructio ad sensum* as to gender.—*Λαβεῖν τὴν*

δύναμιν κ. τ. λ. Is the meaning, that he is worthy of having all these virtues and gifts *bestowed* upon him? Or is it, that he is worthy of being praised as possessing them, or worthy of having them *ascribed to him* by all intelligent and rational beings? Doubtless the latter; for already did he possess the attributes named. As possessing them, he is the object of adoration and praise.—*Πλοῦτον* means, that the *abundance* of all things is in his possession and at his disposal.—*Δύναμιν* here designates his *official power* or *authority*.—*Σοφίαν*, his power to discern the best ends, and to choose the best means in order to accomplish them. —*Ἰσχύν, his ability* to accomplish all which he undertakes.—*Τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν καὶ εὐλογίαν* are not qualities or attributes of the Messiah, but stand connected more properly with *λαβεῖν* in its ordinary sense. The meaning is, that Christ is worthy to receive honour, and glory or praise, and blessing, as ascribed to him and proffered to him by his creatures.

The offering of such an ascription to the Redeemer, (the particulars of which constitute the *perfect* number seven), is an expression of the highest adoration which language can designate. Well does Ewald say: "Angelorum . . . conclamatio, augustam et *vere divinam* Messiae tanti numinis majestatem praeconiis justis prosequens." And again: "In doxologia (v. 12), Messias divinarum virtutum et laudum decore dignissimus praedicatur." Eichhorn, in reference to the passage before us, says: "Excurrit in laudes Messiae, divisam cum Deo majestatem et imperium habentis."*

* Eichhorn, and also his follower and imitator, Heinrichs, both attribute the number *seven* here, i. e. the seven predicates which belong to the Lamb, to the Jewish Cabbala respecting the Sephiroth. I cannot admit this as probable; (1) Because there is no proof whatever, and indeed no probability, that the Cabbalists are of as ancient origin as the Christian era. (2) Even if they were, the doctrine of the *Sephiroth* does not well apply here. They were *ten* in number; and although it is alleged, that these were subdivided into *seven* and *three*, yet this classification does not subserve our present purpose. The *superior* Sephiroth were *the eternal*, *the crown*, and חָכְמָה or בִּינָה i. e. *σοφία*; the *inferior* were *might*, *majesty*, etc. Eichhorn says that God was praised in two ways, either by a *triad* or a *heptade* of attributes being ascribed to him. By a *triad*; e. g. "Thine is the kingdom, and power, and glory," Matt. 6: 13, [if this be not genuine, it is at least *ancient*]; and so (he might have added), in Is. 6: 3, "Holy, holy, holy;" Rev. 4: 11, "Glory, and honour, and power;" Rev. 4: 8, "Holy, holy, holy; Lord, God, Almighty; which was, and is, and is to come," (where we have three times three); Rev. 4: 9, "Glory, honour, and thanksgiving." By a *heptade*; e. g. Rev. 7: 12, where we have the same doxology as in the text before us, with the exception that the *order* of the words differs, and that *πλοῦτος* in the text before us is omitted there, and *εὐχαριστία* substituted in its place. So, again, in 1 Chron. 29: 11, 12. it is said that even a *decade* is found, corresponding to the whole number of the Sephiroth, and subdivided into seven and three. But whoever will carefully examine that passage, will find no decade, nor even heptade, but merely irregular *στρόφοι*, first of five simple members, then of three composite ones, then

(13) And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and those which are in the sea, even all which are in them, heard I saying: To Him who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honour, and glory and power, for ever and ever.

Κτίσμα, lit. *created things;* but nouns in *-μα* are very common in the N. Testament, and not unfrequently resemble, in meaning, those formed in *-σις*. The neuter gender is sometimes used to designate *persons* or *agents;* e. g. in John 17: 2, 21. 2 Thess. 2: 6. 1 Cor. 1: 27, 28. Heb. 7: 7. 1 John 5: 4 al.; see N. Test. Gramm. § 95. 3. Here, plainly, *intelligent agents* are designated; for this the nature of the case demands.

Ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης, on or *in* the sea? The answer depends on the meaning of *κτίσμα*. If this word here designates *angels*, who preside *over* the elements, (e. g. in the text—*ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς . . . ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης*), then *on* or *over* is the proper translation. We might so render the particle *ἐπί* here, in both cases; but it must be with some doubt, whether we should be in the right. In Eisenmenger's Judenthum Entdeckt. I. p. 805 seq. and II. p. 374 seq., the reader may find the Jewish notions respecting angels, as sent into all the different parts

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three of a mixed nature, and then two couplets, the one simple and the other composite. All this supposed evidence then of Cabbalism for centuries before the Apocalypse was written, appears to be without any real support, and belongs only to the conceptions of those who make such allegations as we have now examined.

But supposing Cabbalism to have existed at the time when the Apocalypse was written, yet there is internal evidence in the case before us, that the writer has not made his appeal to it. Instead of selecting exclusively either the superior Sephiroth (three), or the inferior (seven), he has taken some of both. Thus his *σοφία* belongs to the *superior* order of Sephiroth. All of Eichhorn's imagination, then, that John chose the seven *inferior* Sephiroth, as appropriate to a *θεὸς δεύτερος*, appears to be ungrounded; for he has made no such choice. And even if he had, what proof of a *θεὸς δεύτερος* could result from such a doxology, in the present case, when the same doxology (one word only excepted) is ascribed *τῷ θεῷ* in Rev. 7: 12? not to speak of the passage in 1 Chron. 29: 11, 12, which exhibits for substance the same particular predicates. Could John, as a *cabbalizing* Jew, have thus confounded superior and inferior Sephiroth, and thus made a mixture revolting to the feelings of all Cabbalists? This, to say the least, seems to be very improbable. Indeed the very face of the matter vouches for the fact, that John had no concern with Cabbalism, in the passage before us. It proves just the contrary of what it is adduced to prove, by Eichhorn and Heinrichs. As to Ewald, he holds his peace here.

What have we here then? A DOXOLOGY, in which *all* heaven unite, framed so as to be made the most significant possible by comprising the number *seven*, and applied directly to the LAMB, in the same manner as the same doxology is applied to GOD in Rev. 7: 12. What else could the sacred writer expect, but that *equal* glory and honour should be paid to both, by his readers? If not, he has done the utmost in his power to lead them into a mistake.

of the world, to preside over nations, individuals, elements, productions of the earth, etc. For earlier and better evidence of this notion among the Jews, the reader may consult the Exc. (I.) connected with Rev. 1: 4, under the head of *Good Angels*, Nos. 3. 5. Assuming such a basis, the meaning will be: 'All the angels, in every part of the universe, commissioned to preside over all its various elements—land and sea and under-world—heard I saying,' etc. That *rational* beings are meant the writer shows, by quitting the neuter gender—κτίσμα . . . ἅ . . . τά—and adopting the masculine, viz. πάντας . . . λέγοντας, a constructio ad sensum. The sense of the whole would then be of the following tenor: 'The four living creatures and the elders lead the choir; the angels in heaven encircling them echo the song; the angels in all parts of the universe—in earth and sea and under-world—on their missions of love and duty, reëcho it back to the throne of God.' A sublime and truly awful scene!

If now any one is not satisfied with this view, (one to which Ewald gives his assent), then he can explain κτίσμα in a poetic manner; as when the Psalmist calls on the floods to clap their hands, and fire, hail, snow, vapour, and stormy wind, etc., to *praise* the Lord; or as when Isaiah calls on the heavens to listen, and the earth to give ear. The whole creation echo back the song to the throne of God, the song of praise, whose notes loud and deep reach its utmost bounds. Poetically understood, there is no important objection to be made to this; and many will give this the preference. I am rather inclined, however, to the preceding exegesis, from the views which I am persuaded were entertained by the Jews of that period respecting angels, and which are countenanced (not to say *confirmed*) by the Scriptures; as may be seen in the Excursus above named.

In which ever of these ways we interpret the passage, there is no room for an interpretation which makes it designate *a numerical and literal all*. The meaning here must be, either that of guardian angels in all parts of the universe, or the poetic one of the universe as a whole, without making or intending to make individual distinctions which are here uncalled for. In either case, *human beings* in general are not specified at all, even if we suppose them, in the latter case, to be included. If any one is disposed to press the literal and rigid sense of the word *all*, then how can he exclude the *material* objects of the creation? And why should it be pressed here, except for sectarian purposes, any more than when the Evangelists say, that "*all* Judea and *all the region* round about Jordan, went to John and were baptized by him?" Matt. 3: 5, 6. Mark 1: 5. Does this *all* include the sick, the aged, every female, all children, and all unbelievers too in religion? And so of a multitude of texts everywhere to be found in the Bible. Plainly the

all in the text before us must mean *that all* who were able and disposed to praise God and the Lamb, and who united in the song of praise. His *enemies* were not disposed to unite in it.

Τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς, i. e. *τὰ [κτίσματα] ἐν αὐτοῖς*, is a general expression designed to repeat and comprise all the preceding particulars which had been named.—*Εὐλογία καὶ τιμή*, and *δόξα καὶ κράτος*, are plainly two *couplets* here, forming two *στίχοι* in a kind of poetic measure; differing in their *form*, but not in their meaning, from the preceding *heptade* (v. 12) and *triads* (4: 9, 11) of praise; and it seems probable that the writer purposely made them to differ, for the sake of variety. Here, moreover, GOD and the LAMB are joined in the *same* doxology. What could the writer mean, if, after all, the Lamb is merely a *created* being?

(14) And the four living creatures said: Amen! and the [twenty-four] elders fell down and worshipped [Him who liveth for ever and ever.]

As the act of adoration commenced with the *ζῶα* and the elders, so it concludes with them; i. e. they give the last and final response. The *ζῶα* add their solemn assent to all which had been ascribed to the Lamb. —*ἀμήν*, i. e. *veritas, certum est.* So the Jewish congregation at the close of religious services, Deut. 27: 15 seq. Neh. 5: 13. So Christians, 1 Cor. 14: 16.

The words included in brackets are omitted in the majority of the most important Codices. They are not necessary to the sense, which remains substantially the same, whether they are inserted or omitted. If any one should feel that the verb *προσεκύνησαν* demands some *complement* after it, an examination of the word in the Lexicon will show him that it is frequently employed in the absolute sense, i. e. without any complement. It may be so here. Thus has the writer prepared the mind of his readers for the expectation of something highly interesting, which is to be developed when the sealed book shall be opened. The next chapter presents us with the commencement of the disclosure.

FIRST CATASTROPHE, OR OVERTHROW OF THE JEWISH PERSECUTING POWER: CHAP. VI—XI.

That a work of *destruction* is to be performed, is manifest from the nature of the symbols presented as the seals are successively opened. That vengeance is called for and is due, is made clearly manifest, so soon as the dread array for an attack is exhibited; which exhibition is made with the breaking of the four first seals. The duty assigned to the hosts that are marshalled, is made prominent to our view by the supplication of the martyrs in 6: 9—11. As yet, however, the writer has not explicitly disclosed who are the victims of divine justice, but only characterized them

as the enemies and persecutors of the church; although it is not difficult for one well acquainted with all the bearings of his language, to conjecture whom he has in view. He continues to hold his readers a little perhaps in suspense until he nearly reaches the close of the first catastrophe; although chap. vii. contains some indications not to be easily mistaken. But in chap. 11: 1, 2, and 8, he seems quite clearly to intimate what enemies and persecutors of the church are to be cut off and destroyed. Undoubtedly he has added interest to his production, by thus suspending, for a time, the anxious curiosity of the reader. But no well-grounded doubt can be entertained, at last, whose subjugation and destruction are in fact predicted by the series of symbols employed in chap. vi—xi. Those who are exempted from destruction in consequence of the seal of safety put upon their foreheads by the guardian angel, are *of the twelve tribes of Israel*, chap. vii. The necessary implication is, that the rest of these tribes who are not sealed, are exposed to the doom which is threatened. So in chap. xi. John is commanded to measure the *inner* temple for preservation, while all the rest of it is devoted to ruin; i. e. the *essence* of the ancient religion is to be preserved, and is incorporated with Christianity, while all that was merely exterior and ritual is abolished. The Gentiles are to tread down the holy city and temple forty-two months, 11: 2. Here, as often in the prophets, the metropolis seems plainly to be put for the country at large. In this metropolis, the two witnesses appear, 11: 3; and here they are slain, and "their corpses cast out into the streets of the great city, which is *spiritually* called Sodom and Egypt, WHERE OUR LORD WAS CRUCIFIED," 11: 8. This identifies in such a manner as to dissipate all reasonable grounds of doubt.

The only passage in chap. vi—xi, which seems to make against this view, is in Rev. 9: 20, 21. I concede that the most easy and natural interpretation of this, would be to apply it to *heathen* idolaters. But that this is not a necessary mode of interpretation, and that the context forbids such an application, I shall attempt to show, in commenting upon the passage.

When I say, that the destruction of Jerusalem and the wasting of Judea are events predicted by this portion of the Apocalypse, I do not mean to be understood, that Rev. vi—xi. contains merely a *civil history* of the Jewish war. Nothing, in my apprehension, can be farther from a correct mode of interpretation, than a mere historical and literal application of any of the symbolic part of the Apocalypse. The prophetic portion is all *symbolical picture*; but not such a picture as to constitute a regular history of wars and calamities. In its very nature most of it is *generic*, and not individual and specific. While, therefore, the plan of the work is built on the assumption, that the Jewish persecuting power is to be humbled and destroyed; and while it even assumes, that in order to the accomplishment of this, Judea shall be actually desolated; yet particular and specific facts, as they actually took place in the attack by the Romans, are scarcely in any instance to be recognized; and when they are so, it is not for the sake of making out a mere history of the Jewish war, but in order to complete the symmetry of the writer's symbolical picture.

For interpreters, conversant with the prophetic writings, and with what has been done for the interpretation of them since the publication of bishop Lowth's great work on Hebrew poetry, no defence of such a position is or can be needed, for it would be superfluous. But as this work may fall

into the hands of readers who have not been thoroughly disciplined by the exegetical study of the Hebrew prophets, and who have always been accustomed to find the particulars of a *civil* history in the Apocalypse, it may be necessary here to proffer somewhat specifically the reasons why we should adopt a different method of interpretation.

I shall not repeat, on this occasion, what has already been said, Vol. I. § 9 and § 12, on the object and design of the Apocalypse, but merely refer the reader, for the leading and fundamental principles of exegesis, to the discussions there exhibited. I cannot regard anything as more certain, in respect to the object of the Apocalypse, than that its principal design was to hold up to view a picture, which would indicate the certain and universal triumph of Christianity over all opposers; but not in the way of minute and circumstantial history, either civil or ecclesiastical. On this last ground, we never could attain to any satisfactory certainty in our interpretation. No particulars of the great contest are so given, that they can be identified with actual occurrences in this war or in that, in this battle or in that. Of battles that have been actually fought, there are indeed some things in the Apocalypse that might be deemed in a good measure characteristic. But then these same things are characteristics applicable in common to all battles, because in their very nature they are generic. And this constitutes a good reason, why they will not admit exclusively of any mere individual and specific application. The real thing symbolized, is the humiliation and prostration of the persecuting power in question. Now as nations are usually deprived of their power and humbled by means of war and by becoming subject to conquest, John has employed symbols drawn from invading armies, and presented a most fearful array of them. As moreover the peculiar judgments of heaven also concur oftentimes in the work of humiliation and prostration, John has added these to the appalling instruments of destruction. Such are the simple elements of Rev. vi—xi, and such the design of exhibiting them.

If the reader has any serious doubt of the correctness of this principle, I must entreat him to cast his eye over Vol. I. § 2, where the tenor of all the leading prophecies of the Old Testament and the New respecting the church is summarily exhibited. When he has deliberately done this, let him ask the question: Is there any analogy to be found in all this series of prophecy, to that which is claimed by many as to the manner and meaning of the Apocalypse? Is there any minute and succinct history, in any of them, of individual and specific civil events which are to take place in the distant future? The church of the primitive age, or of any other, had no special interest, as Christians, to know what these specific civil events would be. All that pertains to moral and religious comfort, encouragement, hope, and even admonition, is comprised in the disclosures made respecting the ultimately certain prosperity and final triumph of Christianity. Are we then to assume, that the Apocalypse has entirely departed, in its predictions respecting the church, from the tenor of all the other prophecies of the like nature? Nothing short of absolute necessity should induce us to do this; and such a necessity, I am fully persuaded, does not exist.

But as the point now before us is altogether fundamental in respect to the interpretation of the Apocalypse, and as doubts here have occasioned, and still produce, a great portion of the differences of opinion that exist respecting this book, I feel constrained to enter still further than I have yet

done into a discussion of this matter, and to solicit the attention of the reader to some *practical* views of interpreting the symbolic portions of Scripture, and to some facts which respect the historico-civil method of interpretation, which have not been brought into view in the first volume of this work. The importance of the subject is so great, and the necessity of settling on some principles to guide us so urgent before we proceed any further in our exegesis, that I would hope no other apology is needed for introducing a discussion into a Commentary, which might seem more appropriate to a book on Hermeneutics.

I have stated, that in my apprehension *the humiliation and prostration of the Jewish persecuting enemies of the church* is the main truth aimed at in Rev. vi—xi. But my view of the apocalyptic representation is such, that if those enemies had been humbled and subdued by any other nation than that of the Romans, or by a series of judgments and misfortunes altogether of a different tenor from those which actually took place, I should regard the prophecy of John as having been just as certainly and truly and fully accomplished as it now is. If this be a correct view of the case, then of course we are not to seek for a *specific* application of the predictions of John. The various portions of his symbolic picture are all consentaneous with each other. They make out a *congruity* in his representations; and this is what the interpreter is to look for, rather than for any specific and individual application to particular facts, either of this portion of the prophecy, or of that, to particular events of the Jewish war.

If further explanation or vindication of the principles of exegesis that I adopt is necessary, it is easy to make it. To do this effectually, I must refer to similar examples of interpreting the Scriptures, of which an abundance might easily be produced. I will confine myself, however, to two or three.

The 18th Psalm (vs. 4—20) affords an example altogether appropriate to my purpose. David, near the close of his life (comp. 2 Sam. xxii.), undertakes to compose a hymn, which shall exhibit a grateful acknowledgment of all the kindnesses which he has received at the hand of the Lord; specially a grateful acknowledgment of the protection afforded him in times of imminent danger and distress, when powerful enemies pressed upon him. He tells us in the inscription to the Psalm, that it was composed when "God had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul."

In what manner, now, does David execute his task? He represents himself as surrounded with the sorrows of death, and the floods of ungodly men; the snares of death are already cast around him, and he seems to be the certain victim of his blood-thirsty enemies. In this condition he sends up his cry to heaven. Jehovah hears it, and comes forth from his holy temple, and advances to the aid of his servant. The earth shakes to its foundations at his approach; flames of fire, lightnings, and thunder, issue from the place of his presence. He moves on in awful majesty, enthroned in the midst of dark and portentous clouds; on the cherubim (who support his chariot) does he fly swift as the winds. He arrives at the place of conflict. Lightning and thunder and hail become the executioners of his vengeance. The mountains are shaken at his presence, and the channels of the great deep are laid bare down to the foundations of the earth. The enemy are dispersed and overthrown, and David not merely escapes, but comes off conqueror.

Such is the simple, sublime, and most expressive representation of the royal bard. The meaning of all this, i. e. the simple *truth* or *fact* which lies at the basis of the whole, is, (to use his own words), that "God delivered him from his strong enemies, and from them who hated him and were too strong for him." In other words: 'God interposed, in the day of David's calamity and danger, and delivered him from his enemies by his kind care and guardian power.'

All this now might have been said in one sentence, so far as it respects the main and simple truth aimed at in the whole of David's symbolical representation; just as the doctrine taught by the parable of the prodigal son may be expressed in a single verse; or the substantial truths of the book of Job might be comprised in three or four sentences. But if David had contented himself with merely saying, in the 18th Psalm, that 'God often interposed in his behalf, and delivered him when he was in great danger,' he would have uttered a simple *prosaic* truth—the very same truth which he has now adorned and illustrated by his poetry—but he would thus have composed no *hymn*; and he would have made but a comparatively faint impression on the minds of his readers. Who of all the readers of the Bible does not thank him for the delightful Psalm which he composed on this occasion? And who is not gratified with the *manner* of the composition?

The nature of his representation, I may add, we readily perceive. By a symbolic picture he has taught us some important and cheering truths. He has thus contrived to make a much deeper impression on the minds of his readers, than he could possible have made by any merely prosaic declarations. Nor is there any plausible ground for mistake here. No intelligent reader of this Psalm can for a moment suppose, that any part of this representation is to be *literally* interpreted. Such an interpretation would present impossibilities. What David means to have us understand is, that so signal and peculiar had been the deliverances and escapes which Heaven had vouchsafed to him, that he might well represent his case to be like that which would be presented by an interposition of the Godhead such as he here describes. In other words, his own deliverances may be compared to that which is represented by such a picture as he draws.

This case is so plain, that there can be no reasonable dispute here. Let us see, then, what instruction can be drawn from it.

Here is *one* picture; apparently *one* transaction, *one* occasion, and *but one*, in the 18th Psalm. Yet the author tells us, that it was composed in commemoration of *all* his deliverances and *all* his escapes from danger. We will suppose then, that one of the literally *historic* interpreters of the Apocalypse is desired to give us an exposition of the 18th Psalm, and to do this by the application of the same exegetical principles which he applies to the Apocalypse. How can this be accomplished? Many scores of battles David fought; which of them now is portrayed in the 18th Psalm? Which of them all has the exclusive right to such a preference as that of being the only one there represented? It is easy to see, that a choice in this case is impossible. Any one of all the dangerous battles which David fought, and in which he conquered, may be symbolized by the 18th Psalm; and so, of course, they may *all* be symbolized by it; or (which is equally true), *they are in fact* ALL *symbolized by it*. No expositor has a right to select any one from the rest, and say that the 18th Psalm means only that one. The representation of David is essentially *generic;* it virtually comprises all particulars,

while at the same time it exhibits nothing which would distinguish one from another. This would in fact be nothing less than to mar the *generic* nature of the representation.

Will any one say now, that, because minute and *particular* facts are not designated in this representation, therefore it has *no* matter of fact for its basis? Nothing could be further from truth, than such an affirmation. Instead of saying that Psalm 18th has no basis in fact, because it does not specially symbolize particular facts or individual occurrences, truth must say, that for the very reason the representation is *generic*, it of course is the *most significant* of all. To make it symbolize only this particular fact or that, in the life of David, would be to take away a great part of its present significancy, and therefore to degrade it.

The case of the Apocalypse, I may now say, is substantially before us. Here is a symbolic picture of the humiliation and overthrow of the then persecuting Jewish power, presented us in Rev. vi—xi. Here, as in the 18th Psalm, is a *generic* idea to be set forth, and deeply impressed upon the readers of the Revelation. John has drawn this picture with a master-hand. But now, after such a lapse of time, when the circumstances which then urged him to do this have been obscured by intervening ages, some spectator of this picture, we will suppose, rises up and says, that all of it is to be interpreted only by a reference to this or that specific or individual event. This is a degradation of the symbolic picture of John, to which it ought not to be subjected; it must not be, unless taste and propriety are to be laid aside, and we are to form a judgment, not only without their aid, but against their fundamental principles. A minute *historic* interpretation of the Apocalypse, in the sense now spoken of, would deprive the book of more than three quarters of all its meaning. It is no more to be tolerated here, than in the 18th Psalm.

It would be easy further to illustrate and confirm the principle thus advocated, by a reference to Isaiah xiii. xiv. and also Is. 21: 1—10. The destruction of Babylon was decreed, and is there announced. But nearly everything is in the most generic terms. In Is. xiii. xiv. the *Medes* are indeed once named; but besides this, we could not, independent of subsequent history, even conjecture by whom the destruction is to be accomplished. "Distant nations," "consecrated warriors," are summoned to do the work of destruction; it is *speedily* to be done (13: 22); the king of Babylon is to be slain in an assault by night, and to lie unburied; he will go down into Sheôl, and there all the mighty dead will rise up and insult him with the most bitter reproaches. The city is to be swept with the besom of destruction. Here, with the exception of what has particular reference to an individual king, the last monarch of Babylon, (which from the very nature of the case is necessarily particular), all is *generic*. When; how; by what particular battles, sieges, and stratagems; the mistress of the world is to be humbled and destroyed—is not said. The prophet contents himself with merely a generic representation.

Even with respect to the last monarch of the Babylonish empire, how much is there which is merely symbolical? The whole of the striking description of his descent into Sheôl, and of the scenes which pass there (chap. xiv.), must be understood of course only in a generic way. The amount of the meaning is, that the last monarch of that empire will be

slain in the sacking of the city, will lie undistinguished among the slain, and go down to his grave with reproaches and bitter contempt.

So in the vivid picture presented by Is. xxi. Here, indeed, the neighbouring and most formidable enemies of Babylon are named, viz. Media, and Persia. But all else is symbol of the most generic kind. The seer is filled with deep distress at the vision which is here disclosed to his view. The city of Babylon, (itself not named, at first, but called, "the desert of the sea," i. e. of the great river Euphrates), is plunged into the deepest revelry by night; the prophet is commissioned to set a watchman on its walls, in order that he should proclaim what he may see. In a little time he descries chariots and horsemen swiftly advancing. No sooner do they come, than all is theirs; and the watchman has only to proclaim that "Babylon is fallen, is fallen."

What have we now in this picture? We have the prophetic annunciation, that Babylon would fall suddenly, unexpectedly, and so as to rise no more; and this, by the hands of the Medes and Persians. Beyond this the symbols do not reach. Probably more than this of particulars was not disclosed to the mind of the seer.

Let us return again to the Apocalypse. At first the enemy to be destroyed by the fearful host that are assembled, is not named. We advance some way in the description, before we begin to see whither the view of the Apocalyptist is directed. When danger becomes so pressing, that it would seem as if none could escape destruction, then all the raging elements are hushed to peace, and God, in mercy to the disciples of his beloved Son, directs that his seal should be put upon their foreheads, so that they may be passed by when the destroying angel completes his work. And who are they that are thus *sealed*? They are of *the twelve tribes of Israel*. And who then are they, against whom the dread array in readiness is commissioned? Of course they are the same people, from whom the 144,000 have been selected.

All seems now to be in readiness for consummation. Only the seventh and last seal remains to be broken, and then the tragedy is apparently to be completed. Accordingly, when that seal is broken, all heaven stand silent (8: 1) with fearful expectation. But judgment is the strange work of God, and he is long-suffering and of great compassion toward his once beloved people. The catastrophe is still deferred; for the seventh seal is divided into seven parts, i. e. seven different stages of accomplishment, designated by the symbols of seven trumpets. The first four of these, like the first four seals, indicate principally the *preparatory* work of destruction. The first and second of the last three make fearful progress in the work itself, and the final trumpet brings all to its consummation, chap. ix—xi. Near the close of the whole representation, i. e. in chap. xi., (just as in Isaiah xxi.), we are distinctly advertised on whom the judgments of heaven are descending—viz., on that "great city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, *where their Lord was crucified*," 11: 8.

Now in what important respect does all this differ from the prophecies in Isaiah, or from the 18th Psalm? In none except as to the manner of the representation. In the Revelation, the machinery (if I may so speak) is much more complicated. Or I may characterize it in a different manner still, by saying that the writer has with great skill delayed the catastrophe,

and given us several episodes for this purpose, which contain matter of thrilling interest. Such are the scenes in chap. vii. Such is the division of the *seventh* seal into another period of seven parts, distinguished by the trumpets. The locusts and the 200,000,000 horsemen from the East, in chap. ix., are not episodes, for they make direct advances toward the completion of the main work. Chap. x. again is episode. Near as the work seems to be to its completion, yet it is not brought to a close without a renewed and most solemn declaration on the part of heaven, that delay shall be no longer than when the seventh and last trumpet shall sound; 10: 1—7.

Here too, at this point of time, the prophet receives a *new commission*. The book with seven seals has been opened, and its contents exhibited. The final stroke only remains, for entire completion. A new book, and a new commission respecting other enemies of the church, are now summarily presented to view; 10: 8—11. But no further explanation is here made. The reader is thus advertised, that when the catastrophe but just before him shall be past, other scenes of the like nature are to be expected. All this we may name *episode*; but it is episode of a very interesting character. All contributes to delay the catastrophe; but this delay exhibits, in a striking light, the long suffering of God toward his people.

In chap. vi. the writer has presented us with a view of the martyrs in heaven, at the foot of the altar there, making supplication that God would interpose in behalf of his persecuted servants. A favourable response is given to their request; but they are told, that they must wait a while longer, until others of their brethren shall also have been slain, in like manner as they had been. The effect of such a supplication upon an army ready for the onset of battle, such as chap. 6: 1—8 exhibits, is easy to be perceived. In chap. xi. we have a sketch of the fulfilment of what is predicted in chap. vi. respecting other martyrs. In chap. xi. two distinguished witnesses, (*two* are the *competent* number for testimony), i. e. leaders or preachers of Christianity, are represented as declaring their testimony to the true religion; as being endowed with miraculous power, like the prophets Elijah and Moses; and finally, as becoming the victims of popular fury, because of their fidelity. Here then is the finishing stroke of preparation. It was not Christians only from the ranks of undistinguished men, who were persecuted and destroyed, but the most eminent servants of God, those who had given proof of their divine mission by the exertion of miraculous powers, were also destroyed. Heaven's vengeance, then, can sleep no longer. The *delay* until other martyrs should be added to the number of those who were already in heaven (6: 11), has taken place and is now at an end. The cup of indignation is full, for wickedness has come to its consummation. The seventh angel therefore sounds, and all is finished. The writer presents us with the songs of victory (11: 15—18), and with the consequences of it (11: 19); and also with the ensigns of final destruction (11: 19); but—he is a *Jew*, and how can he dwell on the destruction of his beloved city and temple, with a minuteness of representation? He turned from the scene with weeping as a sympathizing Jew, but also, as a Christian, mingling tears of joy therewith, because Christianity is freed from a direful and embittered enemy.

That there is a real catastrophe at the end of chap. xi., I cannot doubt, after weighing long and often the reasons alleged against it, by Bleek, De

Wette, Schott, Ewald, Lücke, and others. It seems to me that the marks of it are plain and unequivocal. But I must remit the reader to the discussion of this subject connected with the commentary on 11: 15—19, and to the remarks made in the Introduction to this Commentary, Vol. I. p. 180 seq.

If this view be correct as to its leading features, then does the Apocalypse, at least this part of it, differ not essentially from the 18th Psalm, nor from Is. xiii. xiv. and xxi, except as to length and episodes. These are peculiar to the writer of the Apocalypse, and show, that with all his references to the O. Testament, and his continual reliance upon it, he is no mere imitator, no copyist. The very nature of his plan required delay, 6: 11. He has shown why this requisition was made; and how the implied pledge was redeemed, which had been given to the martyrs. But his episodes are scarcely of less interest than his main story; and while they make the reader anxious how and when he is to arrive at the catastrophe, they repay the suspension of his curiosity in one respect, by scenes of exciting interest in another.

It is thus that I find a simple *unity* (of a generic nature indeed), in this first catastrophe, i. e. in Rev. vi—xi.; as simple as that in Ps. xviii, or in Is. xiii. xiv, or Is. xxi. Every part advances steadily toward the consummation. As all the seals of the book are opened, of course all its contents are submitted to inspection. The number *seven* twice repeated, in the seals and in the trumpets; the oath of the angel (10: 6, 7); the accomplishment of the prediction, that more martyrs must be slain, before the consummation, with the account of their persecution and death (6: 11 and 11: 3—13); all these combine to show, that the first catastrophe is *complete*, and that the great mystery of God, contained in the sealed book, is made known to his servants, by the disclosures in chap. vi—xi.

Thus understood, our general course of interpretation is plain. We are not constrained to turn over the pages of Josephus, in order to find specific events, which may be regarded as a fulfilment of this or that passage in the Apocalypse. If no history by Josephus was in existence, the triumphal arch of Titus at Rome would tell the story, that Rev. vi—xi. has been fulfilled.

Equally would it have been fulfilled, as I have already remarked, had the Jewish persecuting power been crushed in any other way, or by any other means. Of course, if this be true, it was and is the *general* truth which John has given us, and not a minute pragmatic history of the war, like that of Josephus.

One more remark seems obvious, and is not without its importance. Rev. vi—xi. seems to be, as it were, a kind of commentary on the words of our Saviour in Matt. xxiv. John heard those words. The impression could never have been erased. He has indeed given the subject a new form; yet his allusions to the words of his Master cannot well be mistaken, by any careful and intelligent reader.

If, however, after all these explanations and statements of hermeneutical principles, any one should still feel himself to be at a loss definitely and plainly to comprehend my meaning, I must beg the liberty to place before him some striking examples of the method of interpretation against which I am contending. In my apprehension they will not only answer the pur-

pose of complete explanation, but present a cogent argument against the method of exegesis now in question.

I shall select for examples writers who are no enthusiasts, and who occupy no ordinary rank among the critical interpreters of the N. Testament. To bring examples taken from the many interpreters, who have endeavoured to explain the Apocalypse merely by the dextrous use of the faculty of *guessing*, would be to little or no purpose. I select, therefore, in the first place, a critic of no less note than J. J. Wetstein, in order to illustrate how far the principle of making out a syllabus of civil history from the Apocalypse has been carried, by men of distinguished talents and acquisitions.

Wetstein lays down the position, that the first part of the Apocalypse has respect to Judea and the Jews; the second, to the Roman empire. He then proceeds thus:

"The book written within, and upon the back, and sealed with seven seals (5: 1), is the book of divorcement sent to the Jewish nation from God. (*a*) The victor horseman, crowned, and armed with a bow (6: 1), is Artabanus, king of the Parthians, who smote the Jews in Babylon with great slaughter. (*b*) The red horse (v. 4) means the assassins and robbers of Judea, in the times of Felix and Festus, presidents of the province. (*c*) The black horse (v. 6) means the famine under Claudius. (*d*) The pale horse (v. 8), the pestilence which followed famine and pillage. (*e*) The souls of the martyrs (v. 9), Christians in Judea who were persecuted, and were about to be vindicated. (*f*) The earthquake (v. 12), commotion in Judea preparatory to rebellion. The servants of God sealed in their foreheads out of every tribe (7: 3), Christians under the guardian care of God, who are admonished by prophets, that they should early withdraw from the tempest approaching. (*g*) Silence for half an hour (8: 1), a brief respite conceded to the entreaties of king Agrippa.

"Next follows the rebellion itself, [of the Jews]. (*a*) The trees burned (v. 7) means the country places, and villages, and unfortified towns of Judea, which were first affected with the evils of sedition. (*b*) A great burning mountain cast into the sea, and staining it with blood; and (*c*) A flaming star falling upon the rivers and making the waters bitter (vs. 8—11), mean the slaughter of the Jews at Cesarea and Scythopolis. (*d*) The obscuration of the sun, moon, and stars (v. 12), anarchy in the Jewish commonwealth. (*e*) Locusts stinging men like scorpions (9: 3), the expedition of Cestius Gallus, Praefect of Syria. (*f*) The army with particoloured armour (vs. 16, 17), Vespasian's forces in Judea.

"The death of Nero and of Galba took place at this time, and civil war followed this, (10: 7, 11. 11: 15). The two prophetic witnesses, or the two olive-trees and two candlesticks, (11: 3, 4), mean prophets in the church predicting the destruction of the temple and Jewish commonwealth. The death of the prophets (v. 7), means their flight, and that of the church at Jerusalem, to Pella in Arabia. The return of the prophets to life after three days and a half (v. 11), means prophecies beginning to be fulfilled, at a time when it was thought they never would be fulfilled, nor the doctrine of Christ prevail in Judea and throughout the world. . . . A tenth part of the city falling, the same hour, and 7000 men slain (v. 13), Jerusalem occupied by the Idumeans, and many priests and nobles, together with the

high-priest Ananus, massacred by the Zealots." Wetst. Nov. Test. II. p. 889 seq.

Having thus carried us through the first great catastrophe, (yet without noting the destruction of the city of Jerusalem), Wetstein proceeds in the same style with the civil history of Rome, included, as he supposes, in chap. xii—xix.; and in this he of course finds everywhere individual emperors, battles, sieges, plagues, commotions, etc. Finally the grand consummation (chap. xix.) is, that Vespasian and all his family become extinct, and so *great Babylon is fallen.* Can one now refrain from asking: *Τί τοῦτο, εἰ μὴ τὰ πάντα ἐλαττοῦσθαι*; There arises an almost instinctive perception of degradation, when one looks on such a portrait.

Let us now listen to Herder, who has adopted many of the general outlines of Wetstein, but has filled out his picture in a different way, and with much more life and animation, not to say probability. In his *Maran Atha*, (one of the most delightful books which he ever wrote), he has given us the following clue.

'The conqueror with the bow (Rev. 6: 2) is Aretas, the Arabian king, who overthrew Herod with great slaughter. The red horse (6: 4) means the dissensions, commotions, bloodshed, assassinations, and murders, among the Jews in various countries and regions. The black horse (6: 5) was the famine in the time of Claudius; upon which (6: 8) followed the pale horse, i. e. pestilence and death. "Wretched Judea!" he exclaims, "thus opens the book of thy destinies! From the four sides of the throne of thy God, [referring to the voices of the four living creatures], the cry respecting thee is heard: Come and see! On all sides is wretchedness." The fifth seal (5: 9 seq.) presents the cry of the Christian martyrs amidst these scenes of confusion and blood. The earthquake, etc., which follows, designates the consternation of the Jewish people. The sealing of the servants of God (7: 1 seq.) is the escape of Christians to Pella. The first four trumpets (8: 1 seq.) are signals of tumults, massacres, contests, etc., internal and external, under Florus, and the zealot Eleazer. The locusts (9: 1 seq.) are the robbers and assassins during the five months in which Vespasian traversed Judea; and Menahem, the son of Judah the Galilaean, (Jos. Bell. Jud. II. 17), is *the key to the bottomless pit* (9: 1). The horsemen from the Euphrates (9: 13 seq.) are the Roman legions which Titus led from the East. The wasting and treading down of the city and temple (11: 2) are the zealots and the Idumeans in the city, who fill all places with blood. The two witnesses (11: 3 seq.) are the high priests, Ananus and Jesus. The seventh and last trumpet is only the signal of triumph to the church. The consummation or final overthrow of Jerusalem is put off, by Herder, to another part of the book;' Maran Atha, pp. 64 seq.

How different this is from the picture of Wetstein, every intelligent reader will at once perceive. Yet the general outlines, and the principles of interpretation, are the same in both. But Herder's vivid imagination guides him in selecting all that is thrilling and terrific, from the boundless field in which he and Wetstein both took an unrestrained liberty to range.

Justice requires some notice here of the celebrated English interpreter, Joseph Mede; whose little work on the Apocalypse, (Clavis Apocalyptica), seems to have been the pole-star, in the main, of the English interpreters of this book.

In a direction quite different indeed does he move. The seven seals are, with him, *a syllabus of Roman history*. 'The white horse is the Roman empire, peaceful, flourishing, feared by foreign nations, after the Jewish war was completed by Vespasian. The red horse is the same empire under Trajan and Mark Aurelian. The black horse with the balance, means the severe justice of both the Severi, and also of Septimius, and Alexander. The pale horse, is famine, pestilence, and many other evils, about the time of Decius, Gallus, and Valerian. The souls under the altar, demanding vengeance, means the persecution of Diocletian. The heavens rolled together and removed, on the opening of the sixth seal, means the changes which took place under Constantine, when Paganism was compelled to yield to Christianity. The seven trumpets explain the complex import of the seventh seal, and portray the judgments by which God had determined to chastise and overturn the Roman empire, after the time of Constantine, i. e. the irruption of the barbarians,' etc.

Such are the outlines of Mede's exposition of the first half of the Apocalypse. It is no part of my intention particularly to examine them, either at large or in detail. Whoever desires to see a fatal overthrow of the whole scheme, may consult Vitringa in Apoc. pp. 230 seq.

But has the masterly critic, last named, substituted an interpretation more probable and rational than that which he has demolished? We must consent to hear him, before we reply.

'The white horse and the conqueror upon him signify the peaceful and flourishing state of the *church*, from the reign of Nerva to that of Decius, through 150 years; p. 249. The red horse means the persecutions after the middle of the third century; p. 255. The black horse denotes the church, from the time of Constantine to the ninth century, torn with factions and heresies, and often depressed by public calamities; p. 261. The pale horse denotes the ravages of the Saracens and Turks; p. 267. The fifth seal designates the sufferings of the Albigenses, Bohemian Brethren, and martyrs of the Reformed Church; p. 275. The sixth seal signifies either the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth; or the changes which took place under Constantine; or the commotions in Europe at the time of the Reformation; but it is better to apply it to the destruction of Antichrist; p. 291 seq. Rev. 7: 1 seq. denotes the prosperity and glory of the church, and God's care for its welfare, after the destruction of Antichrist; and so the last part of this chapter is a description of the *millennial* day; p. 318. The silence in heaven for half an hour, after the loosing of the seventh seal, denotes the long continued (?) prosperous, peaceful, and happy state of the church; p. 326. And finally; he separates the *seven trumpets* entirely from the seventh seal, and represents them as relating to the *external* state of the church on earth while under the influence of the Roman empire; but especially as relating to the evils threatened to that empire, both in its pagan and apostate Christian state;' pp. 327, 329.

Neither of the preceding schemes of explanation appears to me at all comparable with this, (although this is from the hand of such a master), either in respect to extravagance or inconsistency. Wetstein and Herder preserve at least a kind of consistency, and have some regard to the *unity* of John's design. Mede has been consistent in his efforts to make out the whole book to be but a syllabus of Roman civil history. But Vitringa has ranged through all times, all places, all nations, from Diocletian down to

the final consummation. In the very same chapter (vi.), we have the history of the church from Nerva down to the Millennium; and in Rev. 6: 12—17, we have, if not the destruction of the Jewish Commonwealth and of the pagan power under Constantine, with the overturns made by Luther and his compeers, yet certainly the overthrow of Antichrist, and the happy state of things in the Millennium. All this, before the seventh seal is broken; and then, when it is broken, a half hour's silence is itself another picture of the Millennium. Last of all, the seven trumpets, (most palpably mere subdivisions of the seventh seal and growing out of it,) are entirely separated from it, and unitedly converted into a syllabus of Roman civil history, ancient and modern. If this be not *deducere aliquid ex aliquo*, it would be difficult to produce an example of such a process.

I might add to these instances of *speculative exegesis*, that of Bossuet, the distinguished Prelate of Meaux; who finds the great catastrophe of the Apocalypse, in the conquest of heathen Rome by Alaric, king of the Goths.

I have selected only a few examples, taken from the works of highly distinguished and gifted men,—men who thought for themselves, and were no mere satellites of larger planets. The reader, therefore, can now judge for himself, whether I have with good reason cautioned him against *minute historical* exegesis, and protested against converting the Epopee of the Apocalypse, into a syllabus of Jewish, Roman, or even ecclesiastical history. The nature of the production will no more bear it, than Ps. xviii, or Is. xiv, or Is. xxi, or Ezek. xxxix, will bear it. Besides, if Wetstein's σχῆμα is a correct one, then Herder's is not; if either of these be true, then must the scheme of Mede be visionary; and if either of those three be well grounded, then of course the claims of Vitringa are altogether unsupported. Indeed the same thing might be said in respect to some scores of other interpretations, brought before the world with equal confidence on the part of their authors, and with as little or even less ground for making any fair claim to confidence on our part.

But to examine all of these different hypotheses in detail, or even to bring them here to the view of the reader, would be a useless task; for in most of them imagination, and fancy, and unlimited conjecture, and dreamy resemblances, are substituted for the patient study of the prophetic Scriptures, and for reasoning founded on the nature of symbol and allegory and metaphor as employed by prophets and sacred poets. When all other books of Scripture have a *why* and a *wherefore;* when all of them can be demonstrably shown to have arisen from the wants of the church, and the exigencies of the times, and to have been adapted to these in such a manner as to be *practically* useful—why should the Apocalypse alone be exempted from the like conditions? If this book had its origin in the distresses and dangers of persecution, and was designed to cheer the constant and faithful servants of God with bright prospects of the future, and to inculcate lessons of patience upon them—and all this lies upon the very face of the book—then it must be true, that to intelligent readers of that period when it was written, it was *intelligible;* else it could inculcate no lessons of patience, nor inspire any cheering hopes, amid the distresses of the times. How now could either of these great ends be accomplished in any tolerable manner, by a mere syllabus of Jewish or of Roman civil history?

A better era in the criticism of the Apocalypse, than the one from which I have selected some leading and eminent specimens, we may hope is now

dawning. Day-light will come at last, in spite of clouds and storms which may have long continued to retard it. The sober rules of criticism, being founded in the very nature of rational beings, must sooner or later make their voice to be heard. It may be drowned and lost for a while, amid clamour and violence. But these are temporary storms. Truth is eternal. *Opinionum commenta delet dies.* The church may hope, that at some future day, if not at present, the Apocalypse, will stand before it in unclouded beauty and glory.

I will only add here, that if we *overlook* all the palpable demonstrations of design, of unity, and of concinnity in the Apocalypse, and make it a book of *disconnected fragments*, we only show that we do not well understand the leading elements of this composition. In such a case we are liable to make *everything*, or else *nothing*, out of the book, just according to the leader or the scheme under whom or which we happen to enlist. In such a condition we must fairly abandon all hope of real symmetry, congruity of representation, or unity of purpose, in the Apocalypse; and when these are all abandoned, how can the book be worthy of our labours or even of our notice?

FIRST FOUR SEALS: CHAP. VI. 1—8.

[After the introductory remarks made above, we may now advance to the opening scene. The first four seals indicate the assembling and preparing of an awful array, commissioned against the enemies of the church. Who can stand before it? A mighty conqueror, bedecked with the emblems of victory, leads on the hosts of destruction. These hosts, armed with deadly weapons, follow him. Then, in the train, comes famine, commissioned against the enemy; and in the rear of famine, march Death and Hades, the allied tyrants of the under-world; while the ravenous beasts of the earth, waiting to devour the corpses of the slain close this terrific procession. Such is the first scene, which the text now before us presents to view.]

(1) And I looked, when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying, like a voice of thunder: Come.

Μίαν is rendered by some, *the first*, like אֶחָד, which in Hebrew is used both as a cardinal and an *ordinal* number (Heb. Gramm. § 396); or it may possibly be regarded in the light of the Greek in such a connection as *εἷς, ἄλλος, τρίτος*, etc. But the want of the *article* here is a decisive reason against this rendering. The nature of the case, however, makes it impossible for the reader to mistake the meaning.

Μίαν ἐκ and *ἑνὸς ἐκ*, instead of the simple Gen. in regimen; an idiom very common in the N. Testament, and not uncommon, at least the like of it, in the classics. The source from which the individual thing mentioned is derived, or the class to which it belongs, is marked more specifically by *ἐκ*. See Rob. Lex. *ἐκ*. 3. h., and Winer's N. Test. Gramm. § 55. 1. *c*. See like classic usage in Kühn. II. § 599. 3. *b*.

Τεσσάρων ζώων are here represented, and also elsewhere as *rational*

beings. The office which they are said to perform, seems to render such a view necessary in order to preserve congruity. On this occasion one of the living creatures is represented as addressing John, in order to render the whole scene peculiarly solemn and impressive.—Ὡς φωνή Nom. for which some copies have φωνῇ, and some φωνῆς, in order to make an appropriate case for the prefixing of *by* or *with*. But the construction with the Nom. φωνή imitates the Hebrew, where כ (= ὡς) prefixed to a noun forms a separate and as it were independent clause, which has its own appropriate construction, either expressed or understood. So here, and often in the Apocalypse. The subordinate sentence filled out would be: ὡς φωνὴ βροντῆς λέγει. A somewhat different construction, and one more conformed to the usual Greek idiom, may be found in Rev. 2: 18. 9: 8. But generally in the Apocalypse, the construction with ὡς is, in such turns of expression, like that above.

Ἔρχου καὶ ἴδε. So the vulgate text; and with good probability. So some of the critical editions; but I have followed Hahn, as usual, in my version. For an illustration of this, Eichhorn refers to Ezekiel 8: 9; which, however, is quite of a different tenor from the expression here. No other explanation is needed than to say, that it is the language of special invitation to consider attentively what is about to be developed. Ἔρχου is language naturally addressed to one at a distance, whose nearer presence and particular inspection are requested. Whether John, after this address, is to be conceived of in the present case as actually advancing from his previous station, is of no moment. His special attention is solemnly urged.

(2) And I looked, and behold a white horse, and he who sat upon him held a bow; and to him a crown was given, and he went forth as a conqueror, and that he might conquer.

To understand the nature of the imagery or symbol of *horses*, here and in the sequel, the reader must compare Zech. 6: 1 seq., where he will find the prototype. There, the four horses and chariots are sent forth into all the earth, in order to survey and make report of the condition of the nations. The colours there, moreover, are red, black, white, and spotted, (vs. 2, 3). Here the respective horses, whose various colours are symbolic, (in Zech. perhaps the colours are merely of an ornamental nature, or for the sake of distinction), are placed at the head of each constituent part of the army which is summoned. This is in accordance with the usual style of forming battle-array.—Ἵππος λευκός, an emblem of *victory*, and appropriate to a conqueror. Leaders of armies frequently rode on horses of this colour; Sil. Ital. IV. 218. Herod. IX. 62. Servius ad Aen. 537, *Candore nivali*, hoc ad victoriae omen pertinet. Particularly did victors use them in a triumphal procession; Sen. De Ira, III. 21. Virg. Aen. III. 537, comp. Apoc. 19: 11.

Στέφανος in this case means a *triumphal crown*, i. e. the diadem of victory; and so, in conjunction with the preceding images, denotes *victory* or *conquest*. The *τόξον* was a common emblem of a victorious warrior, among the ancients; particularly among nations where the bow was much employed, e. g. among the Parthians, as is manifest by their coins.

Thus equipped, this leader of the van goes forth *νικῶν*, i. e. bearing the *insignia* of a conqueror, not here in the sense of *victoriis assuetus*, as some render it. *Νικῶν* here expresses the condition, state, or appearance of the individual upon the white horse, as expressed in the version above. The next clause gives the object of his going forth, viz. *ἵνα νικήσῃ, that he might conquer*, i. e. subdue the enemy against whom he is commissioned, but who are not yet named. *Ἔχων, had*, part. for a verb, see Vol. I. § 15, p. 242 seq.

Are we to regard the opening of the seal as disclosing to the *eye* of John a *picture* of the kind just represented, drawn upon the pages of the book? Or does he, when the first seal is broken, hear the contents read, or read them himself? Nothing is said which decides for the latter. Are the written contents, then, presented to the eye of John by symbols which have the same significancy as the written pages of the book? The latter seems to be the case, for the symbols are described, e. g. the white horse, the red horse, etc. Pictures drawn on the pages of the book and inspected by John, can hardly be supposed; because there are parts of the vision where this would be impossible. It is more congruous, therefore, to suppose that the eye of John beholds the symbols, on the arena of the heavenly world, of what the book contains. In this way, the Apocalyptist is taught what the sealed book contains, rather than by reading it, or by inspecting pictorial representations drawn upon its pages. It should also be noted here, that the *conqueror* in this case is not the *Lamb* himself, as in 19: 11, but the Generalissimo (so to speak) of the invading army. The Lamb evidently remains in his antecedent position, in order to break the remainder of the seals.

(3) And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say: Come!

Ἔρχου καὶ βλέπε is the vulgate text here. But the weight of Mss. is against the last two words; and the Syriac version of the Apocalypse also omits them. They are not necessary to the sense.

(4) And another horse that was red went forth; and to him who sat upon it—to him it was given to take away peace from the land, and that [men] should slay each other; and a great sword was given to him.

The red horse is a symbol of blood to be shed.—*Αὐτῷ*, referring to *τῷ καθημένῳ*, and inserted for the sake of emphasis or perspicuity; Gramm. § 121—4. Note 4.—*Λαβεῖν, to take away;* so *λαμβάνω* and the

Heb. שָׁא not unfrequently mean; Matt. 5: 40. Rev. 3: 11. Dan. 1: 16. Ezek. 29: 19. Mic. 2: 2. Besides, it is strengthened here by the ἐκ which follows.—*Εἰρήνην, quiet, peaceful, secure condition* here, in opposition to one of danger and blood-shed.—*Γῆς*, like the Heb. אֶרֶץ, is more or less extensive, as the nature of the context demands. Here, not the whole earth, but *the land of Palestine* is specially denoted.

Καὶ ἵνα κ. τ. λ. Here is an instance of the *oratio variata;* see N. Test. Gramm. § 196. The construction commences with *ἐδόθη αὐτῷ λαβεῖν*, and then, in the second member, goes on with [*ἐδόθη αὐτῷ*] *ἵνα ἀλλήλους σφάξωσι*, i. e. [he was commissioned to cause] that the inhabitants of the land should embroil themselves in civil war and mutual slaughter. Similar variations of construction are common in the New Testament, and also in the classics.—*Μάχαιρα μεγάλη*, lit. *a large slaughter-knife;* but often it is put for any sharp-edged weapon used in battle, as a scymitar, sword, cutlass, etc. All these are unequivocal symbols of slaughter, i. e. of war. In other words they signify that by war or slaughter the power of the adversary is to be weakened.

(5) And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say: Come! And I looked, and behold a black horse, and he who sat upon it had a pair of balances in his hand.

Ἵππος μέλας, a black horse. The choice of an appropriate colour here was more difficult than in any of the other cases. Indeed a colour strictly appropriate for the designation of famine, could not well be found. But *black* is the colour indicative of distress, misfortune, or mourning, in general; consequently it comes as near to appropriate significancy here as the nature of the case will admit.—*Ἔχων* as in v. 2, i. e. employed as a verb. *Ζυγόν* properly means the *yoke* or *beam* (as we say) of a balance or pair of scales. The later Greeks called the whole apparatus, *ζυγοσταθμός*.

The object symbolized by the black horse and the balance, is too indefinite in itself not to need some explanation; for otherwise various interpretations, with almost equal probability, might be put upon the expressions. The sequel gives us the clue.

(6) And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying: A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and the oil and wine thou must not injure.

It is not the voice of one of the living creatures, which is now heard; but a voice *ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν*. This of course appears to mean, the voice of him who sat upon the throne which was borne up by the *ζῶα*.

Χοῖνιξ, an Attic name of a species of *dry* measure = $\frac{1}{8}$ of a Roman modius, and nearly equal to *one quart* of our English measure. It was the ordinary daily allowance for the sustenance of a man; Odyss. XIX.

27, 28. Athen. III. 20. Herod. VII. 231. Xen. Anab. I. 5, 6; see an abundance of examples in Wetstein, in loc. The dearness of the price of grain, according to this statement, is easily seen. *A penny* (δηνάριον) was the usual price of a day's labour, Matt. 20: 2, 9. A χοῖνιξ was the 48th part of an Attic medimnus of grain, and the ordinary price of this was *five* or *six denarii*. Of course, the usual price of a χοῖνιξ of wheat was only about $\frac{1}{8}$ of a denarius; so that the price becomes advanced, in the present case, to eight times the usual cost. As the statement of the text now is, a man could earn only his own personal subsistence by his labours; and consequently his family are left unprovided for.

Κριθῆς, *barley*, as it would seem by this, bore only one-third of the price of wheat. It was raised in greater plenty than wheat, and was regarded as being much inferior to it.

Τὸ ἔλαιον . . . μὴ ἀδικήσῃς, a difficult, if not as yet an inexplicable clause. Eichhorn indeed adopts a very easy method of interpretation: "Positio mere ornans." Yet I scarcely know a writer less addicted to *positiones mere ornantes*, than John in the Apocalypse. He remarks, however, that 'a scarcity of oil and wine would contribute nothing toward creating a famine;' a position not less strange than the other. Is not *olive oil* (which is doubtless here meant), one of the most nutritious of substances? And would *wine* contribute nothing to the sustenance and comfort of those who were undergoing starvation? Ewald says, that the loss of the *substantial articles* of food would only be aggravated by the presence of *luxuries;* and so this, he thinks, is "apte dictum," in order that the picture of distress may be heightened. This at best is but a small emendation of the *positio mere ornans* of Eichhorn. Vitringa thinks that the caution (μὴ ἀδικήσῃς) is addressed, not to him who sits upon the black horse, but to those who were inclined to be prodigal of luxuries, or careless as to the destruction of the crops of wine and oil; a construction which, if the text will bear it, would clearly make out a meaning quite congruous with the context. Some other commentators also, with views substantially the same as his, have regarded μὴ ἀδικήσῃς κ. τ. λ., as a caution to take the best possible care of the oil and the wine, because they were about to be much needed. This gives a like congruous sense.—That the second pers. *singular* only is employed, in the address, is no serious objection to this, because any collective body of men may be addressed in this way, as they often are in the prophets. The energy of expression is heightened, by thus *individualizing*.

What seems strange is, that the mass of interpreters "sicco pede eam sententiam praetereunt," just as though no explanation were needed. Some indeed have expressed the apprehension that the word ἀδικήσῃς (*to act unjustly*) is not applicable to *oil* and *wine;* but the classic pas-

sages cited by Wetstein in loc. show that this verb is not unfrequently used in the sense of *βλάπτειν*, i. e. *to injure*. Amid this variety of opinion, we may still regard the command *not to injure the oil and the wine*, (in form a *litotes*), as intended to show the need there will be of these substances in order to support life; so great will be the scarcity of bread. In substance this is Vitringa's view of the matter. In other words: 'Instead of being able to support life with the ordinary element of bread, that which was before regarded merely as a *luxury*, will now become a *necessary* of life.' Yet it must be acknowledged, that the picture, even when viewed in this light, does not seem, at first, to be one of very high colouring, i. e *extreme* famine does not seem to be denoted by it; for apparently, only the *necessaries* for daily sustenance are supposed to be very scarce and excessively dear. Oil and wine might be laid up and preserved for a considerable length of time; so that even when the crops of grain should fail, through drought or other causes, and thus become exceedingly scarce, the oil and wine might still be resorted to. *That they would be much needed*, however, seems to be plainly implied in the direction: *μὴ ἀδικήσῃς*. Why not *hurt* them? Plainly because life will depend on them. I do not see any way, at present, in which a more appropriate explanation can be given.*

(7, 8) And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living creature say: Come! And I looked, and behold a pale horse, and the name of him who sat upon it was Death, and Hades followed after him. And there was given him power over a fourth part of the land, to slay with the sword and with famine and with pestilence, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

Ἵππος χλωρός, pale horse; lit. *χλωρός* means a colour like that of a young shoot of vegetation, i. e. a palish green. Evidently a hue inclining to the *cadaverous* is here meant; as the sequel shows.—*Ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ* = יָלַיו. In vs. 2, 4, 5, we have *ἐπ' αὐτόν*, which is in conformity with the more usual Greek idiom.—The construction of this and

* A curious suggestion respecting this passage is made by the venerable Bede, as quoted by Calovius (Bib. Illust.); which is, that '*oil* is for the sacrament of unction, and *wine* for the Lord's supper, and therefore they were not to be injured.' But was not *bread* also an element of the Lord's supper! If so, why should not this too be spared?—There is another suggestion, which at least may have an equal claim to our consideration, viz. that oil and wine were commonly used for the cure of wounds (Luke 10: 34); and the leader or angel-overseer who was to superintend the *famine*, is directed to spare such elements as would be needed in order to aid those who would be wounded by the angel of the second seal. A sufficient objection to this is, that an *alleviation* of suffering is thus provided for; which seems to be contrary to the general tenor and design of the picture. Still, if viewed simply as declaring the *need* there would be of oil and wine, it might not be destitute of significancy, although such a mode of expressing this idea is too fanciful to be admitted.

the next clause is not in accordance with the most rigid rules of syntax; but still, it is not very unusual. The Greek runs thus; *As to him who sat upon him—his name was Death;* i. e. the Nom. absolute introduces the sentence. This, as we have already seen, is very frequent in Hebrew and in its kindred languages, and common in all parts of the N. Testament, see N. Test. Gramm. § 97. 3, and comp. § 121. 4. Note 4.

Ὄνομα αὐτῷ, i. e. ἦν αὐτῷ = ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.—ὁ θάνατος, with the article; see N. Test. Gramm. § 89. 7. Θάνατος simply would not answer the demand of the sense here; for the name was not θάνατος (death in general), but ὁ θάνατος, *death* by way of eminence, "the king of terrors" himself.

Ὁ Ἅιδης est magna umbrarum caterva, says Heinrichs; and he, after Eichhorn, appeals to Ps. 18: 4, 5, (5, 6). 49: 15. Job 38: 17. Better surely would be Is. 14: 9. That ᾅδης has reference to *the world of the dead*, lit. *the invisible world, the under-world*, like שְׁאוֹל, there can of course be no doubt. But since, in the present case, *personification* is intended by the writer, the question necessarily comes up: Whether he means the *umbrae* here, i. e. the shades or ghosts of the dead, inhabiting the under-world; or whether he intends to designate that part of the under-world who were associated with ὁ θάνατος, its supposed king, in the government of it, and who were (so to speak) the servants or coadjutors of the king of terrors, and therefore were imaginary beings of the same class or kind with him, and not merely the ghosts of departed *men* in general. That the associates (so to name them) of θάνατος are meant, seems probable from Rev. 20: 13, where it is said, that "Death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them," i. e. the dead held by them, were raised to life. How could Hades, i. e. (according to Heinrichs and others) the departed spirits or umbrae of men, be said to *give up the dead which were in it?* In other words: How could the dead themselves give up the dead? Is it not plain, then, that the coadjutors of Death, or the *Proceres* of the under-world, are here designated by Hades? If so, then all becomes plain and easy in Rev. 20: 13. The representation amounts to this, viz. that those who hold and wield the dominion of the under-world, will give up their subjects (i. e. departed or dead men), and yield to the power of him "whose voice can burst the prison-house of death," and "who has the keys of Hades and of Death," i. e. of the region over which they reign. So in the passage before us; it is not the umbrae of departed men, which appear in order to destroy others, (see the sequel of the verse), but the king of the under-world and his coadjutors who unite their efforts in order to people their domain. In accordance with this, Sheôl is represented (in Is. 14: 9) as stirring up all its umbrae to advance and meet and insult the king of Babylon, who has just arrived among them. That Hades

and Sheôl may sometimes mean *umbrae*, I would not at all deny; but in passages such as I have now cited, we are obliged to seek another shade of meaning, in case we would preserve any good degree of congruity.

Ἠκολούθει μετ' αὐτοῦ. The Gen. after *ἀκολουθέω*, with *μετά* before it, (instead of the Dat. after the verb), is frequent in the best classics; see Lobeck ad Phryn. p. 353 seq.—*Τὸ τέταρτον*, *the fourth part*, i. e. a considerable part, and certainly a large portion to be destroyed by only *inceptive* war, famine, and pestilence. We are to call to mind here that this is only *ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων*, as our Saviour speaks, in Matt. 24: 8. A more usual designation, in like cases, is *τὸ τρίτον*, *one third part*; see Rev. 8: 7, 8, 9, 10, 12. 9: 15 al. Traces of the number *four*, used in a somewhat similar sense, may be seen in the phrases: "Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and *fourth* generation;" "in the *fourth* year the fruit shall be holy;" the four kingdoms, in the book of Daniel; the four chariots in Zechariah; the four חַיּוֹת in Ezekiel i, and the four *ζῶα* in Rev. iv, etc. In the passage before us, the evident design of the writer is, to select a smaller number than the usual one *third*, because the war is as yet only in its incipient stages.

The commission of *Death* is, that he should employ the agency of those who preceded him, as well as his own, in destroying the enemy. He is directed to slay *by the sword* (see the second seal), by *famine* (see the third seal), and also *θανάτῳ*, i. e. *by the pestilence*. The Hebrew word דֶּבֶר, *pestilence*, is rendered *θάνατος* more than thirty times by the Septuagint; and מוּתָא in Chaldee and in Syriac is often employed in such a sense. The nature of the case requires such a meaning here, for clearly one of the *instruments* to be employed by *ὁ θάνατος* is here designated. *Θάνατος* may therefore be rendered *deadly disease* or *pestilence*; which is an appropriate instrument of *ὁ θάνατος*.

Ὑπὸ τῶν θηρίων τῆς γῆς, *wild beasts*, following in the train of a desolating army, destroy the wounded, and seize on the defenceless inhabitants who are left. This last characteristic, joined by the other three, may be found in Ezek. 14: 21. The junction of *sword, famine and pestilence*, is common in the prophets; e. g. Jer. 14: 12. 21: 7. 24: 10. 44: 13. Ezek. 6: 11, 12. 5: 12 al. That famine would succeed the ravages of a conquering army, it is very natural to suppose. That pestilence should follow in the train of slaughter and corrupted dead bodies, is likewise altogether natural. The ravages of wild beasts are a matter of course, on such an occasion, in countries where they are to be found. Thus Homer, at the very beginning of his Iliad, presents us with a similar representation. See also 2 Kings 17: 26. Ezek. 14: 21. Thus all these scourges are here united in one fearful train, led on by him who

is crowned as victor upon the white horse, which is at once the emblem and the earnest of the victories to be achieved.

In what manner the four first seals have been expounded by some distinguished interpreters, the reader has already had opportunity to see, in the introductory remarks to this chapter. Let him now compare the whole picture, thus far, with the declarations of the Saviour as exhibited in Matt. 24: 6—8. How can any one well refrain from regarding the representation of John here, as a commentary upon his Master's words? And if they are so, then the object in view is neither difficult nor obscure. The whole scene as represented in heaven before the eye of the seer, is a symbol of what is to take place on earth, when Christ comes "to avenge his elect, who cry unto him day and night." The dread array, which appears in heaven to John, is not indeed to be regarded as individually and *in re vera* (so to speak) employed in the destruction of the enemies of Christianity; but this array constitutes the symbols of instruments which would be employed for the destruction of the enemies of the church. We are not to inquire and seek, as Wetstein, Herder, and others have done, after specific and individual events supposed to be designated by each symbol itself, and by every attitude and action of the symbolic agents; for to identify and verify these would be out of question. We are merely and simply to deduce from the whole, that war with its usual accompaniments, i. e. famine and plague and ravenous beasts, will be commissioned to lay waste the power of the persecutors. It is not a battle in this place or in that, during this year or that, but it is all the battles and all the means of destruction, which are here designated. Such is the picture which the Saviour himself has drawn, in Matt. xxiv.; and such is the imitation and expansion of it in Rev. vi.

MARTYRS' SUPPLICATION: CHAP. VI. 9—11.

Nothing is more common than for the leaders of armies, on the eve of a great battle, to present before the soldiers some soul-stirring view of the wrongs which they and their country have suffered from the enemy, and to urge them on by a keen sense of injury, as well as by a regard to justice and safety, to put forth all their energies in the approaching contest. A well adapted address of such a nature, at the very onset of battle, has often achieved an unexpected victory. Every one who has read the history of England's achievments in war will remember, that the greatest naval victory ever gained by that nation, was aided, if not ensured, by the signal hoisted upon the admiral's flag-ship when moving into the line of battle: ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN TO DO HIS DUTY. In a few hours, the enemy were no more. The burst of enthusiasm created by such an appeal may be felt, but never can be adequately described.

Not unlike to this appears to be the scene before us. The awful array, symbols of the work of destruction about to be accomplished, have been summoned, have taken their places, and formed the ranks of the army. Before marching into the battle their ardour is now to be excited. In accordance with the important design of rousing up powerful sympathies on such an occasion, the persecuted and slaughtered martyrs are presented, lying covered with blood at the foot of the altar where they have been sacrificed, and crying aloud to the God of justice to take cognizance of their wrongs and vindicate their cause. Who can wonder that heaven and earth are moved at the cry, and that he who sits en-

throned above manifests in a conspicuous manner and by terrible signs, that their complaint is heard, and that their request will in due time be surely granted? vs. 9—11.

Such I take to be the nature of the scene before us; and it would be difficult to find any adequate parallel of it, in all the scenes which Epopeé presents. When viewed in this simple light, the thrilling interest which it gives to the whole exhibition, is not to be mistaken. Nor should it be said, that there is any incongruity here. *Bleeding souls* at the foot of the altar, as symbols in vision, are no incongruity. *The Lamb as it were slain*, in Rev. 5: 6, is no incongruity. In *vision* everything assumes form and shape, as if it were material. To the *umbrae* of deceased men, all the ancients, Hebrews as well as Gentiles, assigned a visible shape. Even spirit itself was regarded by the ancients, as consisting of the most subtile and attenuated substance, not unlike to air. Of course, if regarded in this light, there is no incongruity in the picture of the Apocalyptist. It is enough for its vindication to say, that all is *symbol*. It teaches, and is designed to teach, no philosophy about the nature of the soul's substance; and no deduction can be made from it, such as Tertullian makes (De Anima), in favour of a material soul. It is an *instructive* vision; and it would be as apposite to undertake a demonstration that the trees and brambles can *talk*, from the fable of Jotham (Judg. 9: 8 seq.), as it would to undertake the proof of the material nature of the soul from the representation before us. It would also be as proper to charge Jotham with *incongruity*, as to bring such an accusation against John.

(9, 10) And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain, on account of the word of God, and on account of the testimony which they held fast. And they cried with a loud voice, saying: How long, O Lord holy and true, dost thou not judge, nor avenge our blood on those who dwell in the land!

Ὑποκάτω τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, i. e. at the foot or lower part of the altar, where the victim was laid whose blood had been shed. The reader must of course perceive, that God is here presented as being in his upper or heavenly temple, (the same is very common in the O. Testament), and there is also the altar in question, like to that in the temple at Jerusalem; comp. Heb. 8: 5.—Ψυχὰς τῶν κ. τ. λ. shows, of course, that the psychology of John did not admit the extinction of the soul by the death of the body. The bleeding victims here presented, are those which had been sacrificed on the altar of their religion. They had been slain διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, on account of God's holy word, i. e. because of the doctrines which it taught and which they received and maintained; but specifically on account of the μαρτυρίαν ἣν εἶχον, *the testimony* [*of Jesus*] *which they held fast.* For a full account of this phraseology, see Comm. above on Rev. 1: 2. The passage before us is so plain and indubitable, that it necessarily casts light on 1: 2. The only difference between them is, that in 1: 2, ἐμαρτύρησε τὸν λόγον . . . τὴν μαρτυρίαν *I. X.* designates a *teacher* of Christianity, whereas, in the case before us, we have εἶχον τὸν λόγον . . . τὴν μαρτυρίαν, *who held fast the word*, etc. By this last phrase private Christians may be de-

signated; and in the present case such appear to be designedly included.

Εἶχον, held fast; see Rob. Lex. ἔχω, d. *a.* This is a frequent sense of the word. The form is Imperf. which suits the meaning here. That the martyrs were once merely in possession of the word, etc., would not have occasioned their death; it was their *steadfast adherence* to it, which caused them to be sacrificed on the altar of religion.

(v. 10) *Λέγοντες*, i. e. *ψυχαὶ λέγοντες*, concord *ad sensum*, the souls in this case being those of the martyrs.—*Ὁ δεσπότης κ. τ. λ*, Nom. used for the Voc.; as often in N. Testament, and in the classics; Gramm. § 97. 3. The term *δεσπότης* is not frequent in the Greek Scriptures, *κύριος* being much the more common appellation, when the idea of *Lord* or *Master* is to be designated. In Luke 2: 29 and Acts 4: 24, however, it may be found in the same sense as here. It designates God as supreme *Governor* and *Master* of all, and as having the power and the right to vindicate his oppressed servants.—*Ἅγιος, holy;* in this case *hating sin*, i. e. of purer eyes than to look on the iniquity of persecutors with indifference.—*Ἀληθινός, true* to his promises, worthy of credit when he stands pledged to punish persecutors.

Οὐ κρίνεις, dost thou not judge, or *dost thou forbear judging*, i. e. dost thou forbear to bring to trial, or to condemn the enemies of the church. The verb itself is *generic*, and therefore may signify to *acquit* or to *condemn*, pro exigentiâ loci. Here it might be interpreted thus: How long dost thou not vindicate, viz. the righteous. The difference of meaning in the whole phrase, in this case, would not be important. But on the whole I prefer the other meaning, viz., that of *bringing to trial* or *condemning*.—*Ἐκδικεῖς . . . ἀπό*, so in Luke 18: 3. In Rev. 19: 2, with *ἐκ*. In all these cases there is a conformity to the Hebrew נָקַם מִן, דָּרַשׁ מִן; see Ges. on these words. *Ἀπό* makes the persons on whom vengeance is to be taken more specific, or at least it gives more intensity to the designation of them. The thing to be avenged (*αἷμα*) is in the Accusative.

Κατοικούντων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, exactly corresponding to the well known Hebrew יוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ, the meaning of which may be general or particular, just as the context requires. The Hebrews, who in prose used only one word (אֶרֶץ) for *earth, country, region*, etc., never found any difficulty in this, because the context of course limits or expands it, just as the case may require. Ewald here takes it in an *expanded* sense; but this seems to be "travelling out of the record." The sequel shows, that the *Jewish* enemies of the church are here concerned. The blood, then, which had been shed by Jews, and particularly in Palestine, is now to be avenged; for the sequel shows, that the supplication of the martyrs found acceptance and would be answered.

(11) And a white robe was given to each of them, and it was said to them, that they must wait yet a while, until their fellow servants and their brethren should be completed, who must be slain, even as they [had been].

Ἑκάστῳ, to each one, emphatic, showing that the gift of the white robe was bestowed on every individual.—*Στολὴ λευκή*, see on 3: 5. The singular, *στολή*, is here used in a *distributive* sense.—*Ἐρρέθη*, with short penult; see Buttm. § 95, Note 4, and under *εἰπεῖν* in the Cat. of Irreg. verbs.—*Ἀναπαύσωνται*, Aor. I. Subj. Middle; the context shows that *long continued* waiting is not designed, so that the Aor. may be here employed. Lachmann reads: *ἀναπαύσονται.*—*Ἕως πληρωθῶσι* is in several Codices read *ἕως πληρώσωνται*, i. e. *χρόνον αὐτῶν*, for so those who introduced this reading must have understood the passage. I prefer the reading *πληρωθῶσι*, Aor. I. Pass. Subj.; and to this may be given either of the two following meanings, viz. (*a*) Until their martyred brethren *should complete* the number destined on the part of heaven to fall in this manner, see Rob. Lex. *πληρόω*, d, *γ*; or (*b*) *Πληρωθῶσι* may be used in a like sense with *τελειόω*, to *consummate* or *complete*, i. e. to advance to the highest state of happiness, reward, perfection, or glory; comp. *τέλειοι* and *πεπληρωμένοι* as nearly synonymous in Col. 4: 12. As a parallel with the first meaning, Matt. 23: 32 may be consulted; for there *πληρώσατε* means *to complete* that which was yet wanting, in order to raise iniquity to such a height as would bring down immediate punishment. So here, *to be completed* would seem to mean, that the number of martyrdoms requisite to bring down final excision must first be completed, before the pending catastrophe could take place. This is the more easy and obvious sense, and is not without parallels; comp. *πλήρωμα* in Rom. 11: 12, and *πεπληροφόρηται* in Rom. 15: 19. Let the reader note the bearing which this has on the time when the Apocalypse was written. The persecution that was raging, was yet unfinished.

Οἱ σύνδουλοι refers to those yet to become martyrs, as being fellow-servants of Christ with those already martyred.—*Οἱ ἀδελφοί*, the Christian title of endearment.—*Οἱ μέλλοντες ἀποκτέννεσθαι, who were speedily to be slain, μέλλοντες* marking the Fut. proximate.—*Ἀποκτέννεσθαι*, Inf. Pres. for *ἀποκτείνεσθαι*; the form in the text seems to be Aeolic, for the Aeolians changed *ει* into *ε* before a liquid (*λ, μ, ν, ρ*), and then doubled the liquid as a compensation. See Winer's Gramm. § 15, under *ἀποκτείνω*.

The answer in this case is made sufficiently plain, by the bestowment of the robes of honour; comp. Gen. 41: 42. 45: 22. Esth. 6: 8, 9. Is. 3: 7. Zech. 3: 5. By implication, also, is the request considered as being granted in the sequel; for this declares merely that *some delay* is necessary, before their wishes can be fully accomplished, and of course thus intimates that they are to be accomplished.

This circumstance of delay we should regard with particular attention; for it explains the ground of various *episodes* (if we may so name them), which are seemingly introduced in order to delay the final completion of the first catastrophe. The writer, by such a plan, has prepared the way for the admission of interesting matter, indirectly connected with his main design and yet consistent with the general plan which he had in view. Considerations of this nature have hitherto been scarcely regarded by most interpreters of the Apocalypse; as every one will see who is conversant with the commentaries on this book.

SYMBOLS OF DESTRUCTION: CHAP. VI. 12—17.

The rest of chap. vi, viz. vs. 12—17, symbolizes the terrific events which are to follow. On the opening of the sixth seal the sun and the moon are darkened; the stars fall from heaven; the heavens themselves are rolled away by a mighty wind (comp. 7: 1); and all the people of the land to be smitten, are filled with terror and amazement, and fly to the rocks and mountains for refuge from the dreaded invasion which is about to be made. Such are the phenomena immediately after the opening of the *sixth* seal; but this is not all which is to be disclosed by this opening. Subsequent events will be noticed in their proper places.

(12) And I looked, when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sack-cloth of hair, and the whole moon became like blood;

Nothing is more frequent in the Scripture than the indication of great changes, especially great calamities, by a description of earthquakes, and tempests, and eclipse of the heavenly luminaries, or the mention of their bloody aspect occasioned by a murky atmosphere. To obtain a full view of this usage, the reader must carefully consult Joel 2: 10. 2: 30, 31 (in Hebrew 3: 3, 4). 3: 15. Is. 13: 10. 24: 23. Ezek. 32: 7, 8. Is. 34: 4. Amos 8: 9. Is. 59: 9, 10. Jer. 15: 9. Is. 60: 20. Comp. Matt. 24: 29. Mark 13: 24, 25. Luke 21: 25. Acts 2: 19, 20. In this last passage, and in Joel from which this is cited, there seems to be merely an indication of great and extraordinary changes; but in all the other passages of the like tenor, the careful reader will perceive at once that *calamitous* events are indicated. Every one, who knows what disasters the ancients connected with the appearance of eclipses and of changes in the heavenly bodies, will easily perceive how forcible such language must be, when employed to designate occurrences yet future. An attentive consideration of the passages referred to will show, moreover, that calamities of every kind, such as are actually brought about by locusts, war, pestilence, famine, etc., are symbolized by such imagery as the text presents. Consequently, unless the context obliges us to a dif-

ferent exegesis, (which is not the case here), we may give to such figurative language a *generic* sense. If the reader wishes for examples of *specific* interpretation in the present case, he may go back to those of Wetstein, Herder, Mede, and Vitringa, which have been already produced in the introduction to this chapter.

Σεισμὸς μέγας, a great earthquake; so in Matt. 24: 7, in describing the calamities which precede the destruction of Jerusalem, the Saviour mentions, along with wars and famine and pestilence, *earthquakes* also—*καὶ σεισμοὶ κατὰ τόπους.* So in Luke 21: 11. All phenomena of such a nature were anciently regarded with great terror, as being the evidences that God was angry and was about to punish.

Ὁ ἥλιος ἐγένετο μέλας, so represented, either because the idea of total eclipse was before the mind of the writer, or else the obscuration of the sun by reason of the smoke and gloomy vapour which usually succeed an earthquake.—*Σελήνη . . . ὡς αἷμα,* which is the colour that usually succeeds an eclipse; or here again, the image may be that of the moon reddened by the dark brown vapour which succeeds the quaking of the earth. In both cases, explain it which way you will, the general import is the same. In all ancient ages and countries, the obscuration of the heavenly bodies filled every one with terror, and was regarded as betokening evil to be near.

(13) And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig-tree casts down her untimely figs, when shaken by a violent wind;

Οἱ ἀστέρες . . . τὴν γῆν. The verb *ἔπεσαν* here, according to Winer, is Aor. II. third pers. plur., Alexandrine dialect, which often declines Aor. II. like Aor. I.; see his Gramm. § 13. 1. But the later Greek made an Aor I. in *ἔπεσα*; see Kühner, § 176. 1. Note 1. The image is probable that of the so-called *falling stars* or *meteors*, the cause of which was inexplicable to the ancients, and so was looked upon with terror. Pliny speaks of it in his account of the eruption of Vesuvius, Epist. VI. 20. See also Lucan, V. 562. Serv. ad Virg. Georg. I. 365. The idea seems to be, that the quaking of the earth also moves the heavens; see Joel 2: 10, where these are united. The passage of the O. Testament immediately before the mind of the writer appears to be that in Is. 34: 4, "All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and their host shall fall down;" or perhaps the declaration of the Saviour, as recorded in Matt. 24: 29, where the same imagery is employed. The ancients regarded the stars as *fixed* in the heavens, which last were looked upon as a solid expanse, רָקִיעַ. When *shaken*, some of the stars were loosed; and *falling stars* were so named, because they were supposed to have been loosened from the firmament, and so to fall upon the earth. It matters

not whether these phenomena were rightly or wrongly explained by them, in a philosophical point of view. The popular *usus loquendi* in relation to all such subjects, is everywhere adopted by the sacred writers; for they do not undertake to teach the natural sciences.

Ὡς συκῆ βάλλει, etc., i. e. the heavens, being shaken by the *great earthquake*, let fall the stars, as a fig-tree drops its untimely fruit when shaken, etc.—Ὀλύνθους, means such fruit as grows on the fig-tree in the winter, seldom matures, and easily falls off in the spring of the year.

(14) And the heaven was removed, as a scroll which is rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved from their places.

The Hebrews, as has been hinted already, conceived of the heavens as a solid expanse, stretched over the earth like a curtain or tent; Ps. 104: 2. Is. 40: 22. 44: 24. Jer. 10: 12. Hence, as scrolls were an expanded piece of parchment, and were rolled up for laying aside, so the removal of the heaven in this case is designated in the like way. A vehement tempest of wind is of course to be supposed here; for this is made quite plain by chap. vii. 1. By this tornado, the expanse above is to be regarded as swept away.

Πᾶν ὄρος . . . ἐκινήθησαν. Such are the consequences of the great earthquake, which frequently produces the like effects, sinking some tracts and elevating others; comp. Ps. 18: 7, 15. The imagery, as before remarked, may be found in Is. 34: 4; comp. Rev. 16: 20. Amidst such terrific phenomena as these, we cannot wonder at the sequel:

(15) And the kings of the land, and the nobles, and the captains of thousands, and the rich, and the powerful, and every servant and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and rocks of the mountains.

Ewald, who is disposed to extend the meaning of chap. vi. to Gentile persecutors as well as Jewish ones, acknowledges that here is a special reference to the peculiarities of Palestine, as to its rocks and caves which afford places of shelter for fugitives. Compare for illustration, Judges 6: 2. 1 Sam. 22: 1. Is. 2: 10, 19, 21. Amos. 9: 3. Still, this is not exclusively a characteristic of Palestine; and I should rely on chap. vii. with much more confidence, as a proof that the *Jews* are the objects now before the writer's mind, than on a circumstance like that just mentioned. The writer doubtless had in his view the passage in Is. 2: 19, 21.

Οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς. Strictly speaking, Agrippa was the last native king of Palestine, in the appropriate sense of that word; and he died some years before the Apocalypse was written. Still, others exercised *regal* power; and Palestine had recently been divided into *tetrarchies*, Luke 3: 1. Hence βασιλεῖς, plur., is used as a comprehensive word, in order to designate the various governors or viceroys who then ruled over

the country of Judea. Its use here is *poetic*, and it is not to be taken as in a mere civil history. That *kings* are first mentioned on the list of persecutors, is natural, if we consider either their rank, or the influence which they must have as persecutors. In the same manner do we find them introduced and severely denounced in the book of Enoch, 48: 7—11.

Μεγιστᾶνες καὶ χιλίαρχοι designates civil and military Praefects or officers of high rank. Thus in Mark 6: 21, "Herod made a feast to his *μεγιστᾶνες* and *χιλίαρχοι*." These are mentioned next to *kings*, because they stand next to them in point of rank. *Χιλίαρχος* is not always confined in its signification to designate merely *the captain of a thousand*, as the name etymologically imports, but is sometimes employed, as in our text, for the designation of a military officer of the higher rank without respect to the numbers whom he may control.—*Πλούσιοι*, those who *abound in wealth; ἰσχυροι, men of power* or *influence* in other respects. In a military description it would mean, *men powerful in war, heroes;* but being here coupled with *πλούσιοι*, it must be modified and so have a different sense assigned to it.

Πᾶς δοῦλος καὶ ἐλεύθερος, (so is the text in Hahn), is designed as a comprehensive expression, i. e. to include all of every rank and station; comp. 1 Cor. 12: 13. Gal. 3: 28. Ephes. 6: 8. Rev. 13: 16. 19: 18.

Ἔκρυψαν . . . τῶν ὀρέων. The manner of expression in *εἰς τὰ σπήλαια* strikes us, at first, as being unusual; for we should naturally expect *ἐν τοῖς σπηλαίοις*. But here, as often elsewhere in the N. Testament, and in the classics, some verb significant of *coming to*, or *entering into*, is implied before the verb which is expressed; see N. Test. Gramm. § 113. Note 2. *b.;* and comp. Matt. 2: 23, *εἰς πόλιν*. 13: 9. Luke 11: 7. John 9: 7. Acts 7: 4. 8: 39, 40, al. saepe. See Rob. Lex. *εἰς*, No. 4.

(16) And they say to the mountains and to the rocks: Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!

Λέγουσι, Pres. tense, although preceded in the same sentence by the Praeter; and so, often in the New Testament and in other Greek; see N. Test. Gramm. § 136. 1. *b.* Note, and Winer, § 41. 2. *b*, where a great number of examples from the N. Testament and the Classics is exhibited.

The particular expression here, *πέσετε κ. τ. λ.* may be found for substance in Hosea 10: 8. Here, and in our text, the sentiment is: 'Let us perish by a death the nature of which we understand, rather than by the awful death which is threatened, the agonies of which we do not know.' In like manner Pliny represents some of the fugitives from the fiery shower of Vesuvius, as praying for death, that they might escape

the igneous deluge of the mountain: "Erant qui metu mortis mortem precarentur;" Ep. 6. 20. The wish expressed in the text may be farther illustrated, by a reference to the very common case of suicide in prisons, when persons are under sentence of death, or expect it with certainty. They thus escape a more horrible death, and in their apprehension a more disgraceful one, by an exit which is less appalling. So in the case before us; death is certain, when the Lamb is angry and pursues his enemies with judgments. But death by the crushing power of the rocks and mountains, is less terrible than that which threatens them, and which is to be inflicted by the power of the Lamb. In a word; anxiety and distress are so great, that any change whatever would seem to promise something better. After all, however, we need not nicely weigh words uttered, like these, in a state of the highest terror and agony. We might well compare them, perhaps, with the words of Peter, in a transport of mind very different indeed from that here described, but still in a state of great excitement, Luke 5: 8. Matt. 17: 4. That John seems to have taken the expression here from the declaration of the Saviour recorded in Luke 23: 30, (which again may be referred to Hosea 10: 8), in regard to a subject like that now before us, one can scarcely fail to see and acknowledge.

It should be noted here, also, that those who thus deprecate the wrath of the Lamb, speak as if they knew from whom these judgments came. They are conscious that *he* inflicts them. Could this be well said of *heathen* Gentiles, who had no knowledge of the Saviour? I mean to ask: How could it be said with the appearance of verisimilitude?

"He who sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb," are distinguished here agreeably to the preceding representations in chap. iv. v. The position of the Lamb there described appears to be still maintained; and so it continues to be, until the seals are all unloosed.

Ἀπὸ προσώπου κ. τ. λ. They could bear death from the crushing power of the rocks and mountains, better than they could bear the *look* of their righteous Judge and offended Lord.

(17) For the great day of his wrath is come, and who is able to stand?

Ἡ μεγάλη, great in distinction from other days, when ordinary chastisements or judgments befel them. This is the day of consummation. —*Σταθῆναι, to stand firm* or *fast*, i. e. to endure or abide. Comp. Ps. 1: 5. 76: 7. 130: 3. 147: 17. Nahum. 1: 6, where עָמַד is used in the like sense; and so the Perf. and Aorists of *ἵστημι* in the N. Testament, see Lex. If in this case a reference was made by the mind of the writer to the O. Testament, it seems to have been to Nah. 1: 6.

SEALING OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD: CHAP. VII.

In such a state of things, while the whole material universe is in commotion and seems to be on the verge of ruin, there is danger that the righteous and the wicked may be involved in one common destruction. What is to be done? The Saviour has promised safety to his disciples amid the ruin of their country; excepting that persecution would be permitted to rage in a greater or less degree, until that ruin was accomplished; Matt. 24: 22, 31. Mark 13: 27. Luke 21: 28. That promise must be fulfilled. The time of destruction is now near. The fearful commotion of the elements and of all nature is plainly indicative of this. The destroying angels have their commission, and they are beginning to execute it. But that the *elect* (Matt. 24: 22) may be exempted from the common lot of the wicked, some sign or token must be exhibited, which, like the blood of the paschal lamb upon the door-posts of the Hebrews in Egypt, will be an indication of the will of heaven, that "the destroyer" should pass by and leave them unharmed. In order that this may be accomplished, the tempest which was shaking the heavens and the earth, is hushed to peace. An angel, bearing the seal or stamp of the living God, descends to impress his sacred name upon the followers of the Lamb, and thus mark them as his property. Out of every tribe these followers are selected. One common safety belongs to all. The gospel, which had been preached to all, admits all equally to avail themselves of its privileges. They receive therefore a mark of safety; and then the countless host of the redeemed in heaven, with palm-branches of victory in their hands, the emblems of the church's triumph, unite in praising God, with all the angels, and elders, and living creatures. One universal symphony fills the heavenly world. Among this countless host, stand conspicuous, in robes of white, the martyrs who have sealed their testimony by their own blood. The glory to which they are destined is brought distinctly into view, in order that persecuted and suffering Christians, then 'enduring the cross,' might, 'on account of the joy set before them, despise the shame,' and attain at last to the same blessedness.

Such are the contents of chap. vii. It is doubtless to be considered in the light of an *episode;* but still it contributes much to the beauty and interest of the principal piece. The most rigid critic could not have any desire to dispense with it.

(1) And after these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the land, holding in the four winds of the land, that the wind might not blow upon the land, nor upon the sea, nor upon any tree.

The Hebrews designated but *four* points of the compass, north, south, east, and west. The wind from these four quarters is designated, because thus all winds are comprehended. This manner of designation, moreover, may have reference also to the frequent changing and shifting of the wind in violent tornados. So in Jer. 49: 36. Dan. 7: 2, four winds are designated in the same way as here, viz., as comprising all winds; and the like elsewhere. *Angels* are here mentioned as commissioned to guide and manage these elements. That this is a *biblical* idea, the reader may see by recurring to Exc. I. *Good Angels,*

Nos. 4. 5. It would seem that the same angels had raised the tornado, (implied in the preceding chapter), who are now to restrain it. To this tornado, also, we must attribute the fearful commotion described in the preceding context, vs. 12—14.*

The four corners of the earth is an expression which has its basis in the Hebrew view of things, viz. that the earth was an extended plain. *The four corners* correspond with the four points of the Hebrews and therefore designate *all* the places where it was necessary for the angels to take their station, in order to have complete control over the winds.—*Κρατοῦντας, holding, controlling*, i. e. in the present case, holding in, restraining.

Μὴ πνέῃ . . . πᾶν δένδρον, i. e. that it might everywhere and universally be calm, so that not even the leaves of the trees would be shaken. This last circumstance, therefore, viz. *ἐπὶ πᾶν δένδρον*, is not insignificant. It marks the intensity, i. e. the high degree, of the quietude. We should express substantially the same idea by saying: It was so still, that there was not a ripple upon the water—and not a leaf of the trees moved.

(2) And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the land and the sea;

Ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου, i. e. from the east. Why the *east*? "Quod

* No one, indeed, can well estimate the nature of this representation, who is unacquainted with the common opinions of the ancient Hebrews, respecting the operation and power of the winds. In the book of Enoch, we have views of a similar nature quite fully developed. The winds are kept in store houses, Enoch 18: 1, comp. the same sentiment in Ps. 135: 7. Jer. 10: 13. 51: 16, and see also Prov. 30: 4. In Enoch 18: 4—6 it is said: "I beheld the winds occupying the exalted sky; arising between heaven and earth, and constituting the pillars of heaven. I saw the winds which turn the sky, which cause the orb of the sun and all the stars to set; and over the earth I saw the winds which support the clouds." He then adds: "I saw the path of the angels," i. e. (as I understand him) of those who managed these winds. So again in 71: 7 and 72: 2, the wind is mentioned as occasioning the motion of the heavenly bodies, e. g. the chariot of the sun. In chap. lxxv. and lxxvi, the author expatiates at large on the influence of winds upon all the phenomena of nature, in heaven and on earth, such as drought, cold, heat, hail, snow, dew, blight, health, pestilence, etc. In chap. 14: 9, 10, he represents the winds as carrying him aloft to heaven, etc. In these and the like passages, in accordance with the views of the times, the winds are presented as the most powerful and universal agent in nature; even as sustaining the heavens, and moving the planets through them. No wonder, then, that John here presents us with the terrific effects of the tornado, raised by angels who are commissioned to execute the work of destruction. It matters not whether we consider these angels as the ordinary guardian angels of the winds, (then we might naturally expect *τοὺς ἀγγέλους*), or whether they now act merely by special commission. The consequences of their interposition are the same.

oriens locus coeli est dignissimus," says Eichhorn; and Ewald to the same purpose, only that he adds: "It is the special dwelling-place of the Godhead." Yet in Ezek. 1: 4, the *theophany* is exhibited in the *north*. Job 37: 22 refers perhaps to the dwelling-place of God in the north: "Splendour comes from the *north*." Greece, Persia, Babylon (Is. 14: 13), and Hindoostan, all place the residence of the divinity on some lofty mountain in the north, such as the Thessalian Olympus, Al Bordj, Meru, etc. Nor do I recollect any passage in the O. Testament, which refers to the *east* as the peculiar dwelling-place of God. Still, the book of Enoch, 24: 2, 8, represents the east as the paradise of God, and as the place where the Lord of glory dwells and will judge the world; and so long as heaven is conceived of as a *locality*, (and so the Hebrews did conceive and speak of it), the east, from which the sun, moon, and all the stars apparently proceed, might very naturally be selected as the dwelling-place of divine Majesty, although, in more ancient times, the north (as it would seem) had been selected. It is not necessary, however, to find the dwelling-place of the Most High in the region where the angel makes his appearance, or (in other words) to suppose they both are in one and the same place. Enough that, like the rising sun which comes forth in all its splendour from the east, the angel with the seal in his hand comes forth in like splendour, to perform the grateful task assigned to him.

Σφραγῖδα, i. e. *a seal* or *stamp*, on which is doubtless supposed to be engraved the name of Jehovah, which must be impressed upon the foreheads (v. 3) of the servants of God, so that they would at once be recognized as his, and thus be secure against all harm; see and comp. on 2: 17.—*Οἷς ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς*, seemingly a pure Hebraism = אֲשֶׁר נִתַּן לָהֶם, but the like is found even in good classics; see N. Test. Gramm. § 121. 4. Note 4. It is a mode of expression not unfrequent in this book.—*Ἀδικῆσαι, to injure, hurt, do harm to;* comp. 6: 6.—*Τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν*, the usual division which comprehends the whole world, or the whole of any country, and it is here designed to be a generic and comprehensive expression.

(3) Saying: Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, until we shall have sealed the servants of God upon their foreheads.

Before proceeding to the actual work of destruction, for which all had seemed to be ready, the executioners of divine justice, i. e. the destroying angels, are required to suspend their work, until the servants of God can be rendered secure. The *earth*, *sea*, and *trees*, are all mentioned here, in conformity with the division made in v. 1, where the meaning is rendered much more intense by the addition of *τὰ δένδρα*. And so here; not even a leaf is to be injured by the winds, until the servants of God shall be rendered secure.

Ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων αὐτῶν. This is no doubt after the model in Ezek. 9: 4, 5, where an angel is commissioned to go through the city of Jerusalem, and *mark upon the forehead* all who should be exempted from the approaching slaughter. In Ex. 12: 7, the Israelites are directed to mark their door-posts with the blood of the paschal lamb, so that the destroying angel might pass them by in his midnight work of excision. In Rev. 2: 17, we find that the diadem which "kings and priests unto God" are to wear, as the reward of victory, has a frontispiece on which is inscribed the name of JEHOVAH. But this crown is not given until the probation of each one is closed; and therefore, in the present case, the name is not placed upon a *mitre* but on the *forehead*, where it will be most distinctly visible. Nor is it placed there simply in the way of *reward*, as in 2: 17, but for the purposes of *safety*.*

(4) And I heard the number of those who were sealed; one hundred and forty and four thousand were sealed, from every tribe of the children of Israel.

That the number in this case is *symbolical*, and not to be literally taken, seems scarcely necessary to remark. The twelve tribes of course give the occasion for selecting the number *twelve;* and this is often repeated in other places; comp. Rev. 21: 12, twelve gates, twelve angels, twelve names of tribes; 21: 16, twelve thousand furlongs; 21: 17, the wall is twelve times twelve cubits high, i. e. 144 cubits; 21: 21, the twelve gates are twelve pearls; comp. in Ezek. 48: 30—34. Compare with these the twelve fountains in Elim, Ex. 15: 27; the twelve pillars around the altar, Ex. 24: 4; twelves cakes of shew bread, Lev. 24: 5; twelve gems in the breast-plate of the high-priest, Ex. 28: 10; twelve stones set up on the banks of the Jordan, Joshua 4: 3; offerings by twelves, Num. 7: 3, 87. 29: 17. Ezra 8: 35; vessels for the temple,

* The Romans marked their soldiers in the *hand*, and their slaves in the *forehead;* Veget. de Re milit. II. 5. Aetius, 8. 12. Hesych. sub *ἐστιγμένα*; and in Is. 3: 21, קַעֲקַע, *a brand*, is mentioned as a mark of servile disgrace. Yet here the design of a mark is evidently different. It unquestionably refers to some custom, well known to the writer and his original circle of readers, of branding the name of the king, or of the god whom they served, upon the *foreheads* of subjects or worshippers; answering, at the same time, the purposes of honour and defence, and designating the expression of devotedness. The mark set upon Cain, Gen. 4: 15, so far as it served the purpose of defending his life, might be compared with the present case. So Herod. II. 113 speaks of the worshippers of a certain god as having his name branded on them; and such was the custom among the ancient Hindoos, Asiat. Res. VII. p. 281 seq. In like manner, the worshippers of the beast, in the sequel, are represented as bearing his mark, 13: 16—18. 14: 9, 11. 16. 2. 19: 20. 20: 4. Comp. 3 Macc. 2: 29. I do not apprehend, however, that in our text any particular reference is made to this custom among idolatrous nations, but merely to the passage in Ezek. 9: 4, where the mark is both symbol and pledge of exemption from slaughter.

Num. 7: 84—86; twelve prefects over Israel, 1 Kings 4: 7; twelve lions near the royal throne, 1 Kings 10: 20; twelve oxen supporting the brazen laver, 1 Kings 7: 25; the altar twelve cubits long and twelve broad, Ezek. 43: 16, etc. See Exc. II. at the end. A *thousand* is the frequent and familiar number for designating *many*, and oftentimes it stands for an indefinite number; Ps. 90: 4. 2 Pet. 3: 8. Rev. 20: 2, 3. Dan. 7: 10. Rev. 5: 11, comp. Heb. 12: 22. That there were exactly the number 12,000 of each tribe, who were Christians at this period, I suppose will hardly be contended for by any sober interpreter. Some of the tribes seem to have been extinct; at least one of them (Dan) is omitted in the sequel. Of the descendants of the *ten* tribes, there were certainly but a small number in Judea, at this period. The 144,000, then, designates a goodly number, we may say *a large number*, of Christians from among the Jews. If, however, the reader has any difficulty on the score of making out so many Jewish Christians, he may consult Acts 6: 7. 12: 24. 19: 20. Very considerable progress, according to these passages, we must suppose the gospel to have made among the Jews, when the Apocalypse was written.

Ewald labours here, in order to establish his view of this part of the Apocalypse, viz. that it extends to and comprises all Christians in every part of the earth, to show that all Christians then bore the title of *Jews*, because it was among the Jews, and by Jews, that the Gospel was first propagated. But his arguments, built merely upon hypothetical propositions, are far from being satisfactory. How is it possible, after attentively reading the epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews, to suppose that all Christians were regarded as Jews, in the days of the apostles? Besides; what could induce the writer in the present case, to make this enumeration so particular and specific as he has done, if he did not intend to show, that Christians in the land of Judea only, at all events principally, were intended to be included here? The dangers of other Christians, in other lands, are brought to view in another part of the book, i. e. in chap. xii—xix.

(5—8) Of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, etc.

The manner and order of enumeration here demand some special explanation. (*a*) The *order* is not that of *birth;* for the order of birth in Gen. xxix. xxx. is thus: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin. In the blessing of Jacob, Gen. xlix. this order is changed, and runs thus: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph, and Benjamin. In the blessing of Moses, Deut. xxxiii, a different order still is observed: Reuben, Judah, Levi, Benjamin, Joseph, Zebulun, Issachar, Gad, Dan, Naphtali, Asher; in

which list, moreover, Simeon is omitted. So again, in Ezek. xlviii. there are two enumerations of the twelve tribes, both in an order different from each other, and from the preceding arrangements: viz. in 31—34, where Levi is reckoned as one, and Joseph as only one; while in vs. 1—27, *which have respect to the division of the country*, Levi (who had no heritage in land) is omitted, and at the same time Ephraim and Manasseh are counted as *two* tribes.

(*b*) This last mode of reckoning points us to a peculiarity *which has reference to the division of country;* for in this, one tribe, viz. that of Levi, is of course to be omitted. Thus, in Num. xiii, Levi is omitted; and Ephraim and Joseph (i. e. Manasseh) are reckoned as *two* tribes, so as to complete the number *twelve*. Here also, in v. 11, the writer expressly states, that he means by *Joseph* to designate the tribe of Manasseh, because (v. 8) he had before mentioned Ephraim: "Of the tribe of Joseph, namely of the tribe of Manasseh." This last circumstance has an important bearing on the explanation of the passage in the Apocalypse now before us; for in Rev. 7: 6 *Manasseh* is mentioned, while in v. 8 *Joseph* is also named. By *Joseph*, then must doubtless be here meant *Ephraim;* for this is a parallel case with that in Num. 13: 11. So in Num. i, in twice reckoning the tribes, Levi is omitted, and Ephraim and Manasseh are inserted. So also in Josh. xvi. xvii, Ephraim and Manasseh are reckoned as *two* distinct tribes; Josh. 14: 4 expressly declares this. In the prolonged account of the original division of Canaan, in Joshua xiii—xix, Levi is of course omitted, because he had no heritage; see 13: 15, 24, 29 (comp. 17: 1, 2). 15: 1. 16: 5. 18: 11. 19: 1, 10, 17, 24, 32, 40, where Manasseh and Ephraim are again counted as *two* tribes. For the reason of the omission of Levi, see Josh. 14: 3, 4, and 18: 7.

(*c*) We perceive an obvious reason for the omission of Levi, in the preceding accounts of the apportionment of the country. But there are other cases in the O. Testament, of a similar nature in regard to the method of reckoning, i. e. the omission of some tribes, which are not dependent on this principle. E. g. Deut. xxxiii. omits Simeon, in the blessing of Moses. So in 1 Chron. 4: 1, 24. 5: 1, 11, 23 (comp. 7: 14). 6: 1. 7: 1, 6, 13, 20, 30. 8: 1, the sons of Benjamin are twice reckoned; Ephraim and Manasseh are both counted; and the tribes of Zebulun and Dan are both omitted; although in 1 Chron. 21: 2, the whole twelve are inserted. Such are the *facts* before us. It remains now to apply them to the solution of the difficulty in the text.

In the cases mentioned under (*c*), we find, first, that Simeon is omitted in the blessing of Moses; and, secondly, that in the second enumeration in Chronicles both Zebulun and Dan are omitted, while Ephraim and Manasseh are counted as two tribes, and Benjamin is

twice inserted. In (*b*), we find *Levi* purposely omitted, in the accounts of the division of the country, while Ephraim and Manasseh are counted as two tribes. Consequently we see, that the *twelve* tribes are *differently* reckoned, at different periods, and according to the different objects in view. There are no two cases in the whole Bible, where the *order* and *number* of the names are both the same.

The like liberty now, has the author of the Apocalypse taken in the case before us. *Dan* is omitted, and Ephraim and Manasseh are inserted as constituting *two* tribes. It is true, that Ephraim is not named expressly, but is called *Joseph* (v. 8). Yet there is nothing strange in this, for in Num. 13: 8, 11, Ephraim is named and Manasseh is called *Joseph;* which is exactly parallel with the present case of the same nature; and therefore no more illustration of this seeming peculiarity is needed.*

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* The different hypotheses that have been invented for solution of the difficulty before us, are hardly worth examining or even naming, after these views have been given from the O. Testament. Grotius thinks that the tribe of Dan is omitted, because it was nearly extinct, when the Apocalypse was written. If such were the fact, then the omission on this ground may indeed be deemed probable. Proof of the fact, however, is wanting, excepting we gather it from the later imprecations of the Rabbins against the tribe of Dan, as having taken the lead in idolatry; see Heinrichs Comm. II. p. 231. Hartwig, in his *Apologie der Apocalypse*, Th. II. p. 237 seq., supposes *ΔΑΝ* to have arisen from *ΜΑΝ*, and this to have been put by abridgment for *Μανασσῆ*; and yet Andreas, Origen, and even Irenaeus, found the reading *Μανασσῆ*, and speak of the difficulty arising from it; so that such a conjecture is underserving of serious notice. Eichhorn, Heinrichs, and others, are inclined to maintain, that the omission was because of the early apostacy of Dan to idolatry, Judg. xviii. and 1 Kings 12: 29, 30. But what shall we say of the still earlier idolatry recorded in Ex. xxxii.; and of the repeated and long continued examples of it among all the tribes, as recorded in the books of Judges, Kings, and Chronicles? Eichhorn, after Bengel, has also suggested another solution, viz., that the word *Manasseh* (Rev. 7: 6) is used in a symbolical and enigmatical manner; for נָשָׁה means *to forget*, and מְנַשֶּׁה would therefore signify *obliviscendus*, i. e. *he who ought to be forgotten* or *passed by*, viz. Dan, either because of his idolatry, or because of the fewness of his number. Yet מְנַשֶּׁה, Part. Piel, cannot mean *obliviscendus*, but *faciens oblivisci*, or *tradens oblivioni;* so that we offend against the laws of grammar by such an exegesis; and not only so, but to single out one name in such a catalogue, (a name too in itself of proper significance), and make it *enigmatical*, while all the rest of the names are considered merely as proper names, is doing a violence to the plain principles of interpretation which is inadmissible. Last of all, the ancient interpretation of Andreas, which has been followed by many, may be mentioned; which is, that the tribe of Dan is omitted, *ὡς ἐξ αὐτῆς τεξομένου τοῦ Ἀντιχρίστου*, i. e. *because Antichrist is to spring from it;* see in Heinrichs, ut sup. p 232. Whence this is to be proved; or, even if it were true, how this could exclude the Danites of John's day from a place on the list of the tribes then living; are questions that need no discussion.

The simple conclusion is, that the author followed the customary mode of reckoning the tribes, prevalent at the time when he wrote. That such a *usus loquendi* was prevalent, seems to be plain from two facts; the one, that John would not have adopted a mode of reckoning repugnant to the feelings and usages of his contemporaries, for nothing was to be gained by so doing; the other, that we have an abundance of examples of a like method of reckoning in the O. Testament. Nothing strange could be thought of this, when John adopted it; at least, such seems to be the case, from a view of the *facts* that have been presented.

(9) After these things I looked, and behold! a great multitude which no man could number, of every nation, and [all] tribes, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palm-branches in their hands.

The form *ἠδύνατο*, with *η* for augment, is Attic and usual, N. Test. Gramm. § 54. 3. Note 1.—*Ὃν ἀριθμῆσαι αὐτόν*, like the Hebrew idiom, e. g. אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִסָּבֵל לְמִנּוֹתוֹ; but see on v. 2 above.—*Καὶ φυλῶν κ. τ. λ.* in the *plural*, and therefore the plural of *πᾶς* must be mentally supplied before each. The actual repetition of the adjective is unnecessary, and would here be ungrateful to the reader.—*Ἑστῶτες* the usual form, (instead of *ἑστηκῶτες*), arising from syncope and contraction, Kühn. § 235. 3 and Anm. 6; used in the sense of the Pres. tense, Gramm. § 136. Note 2. c.—*Περιβεβλημένους*, coming from a verb which governs two Accusatives (Gramm. § 104.); here the Part. is in the Pass. voice, and it retains the latter of the Accusatives, Gramm. § 105. As to the Acc. case of the Participle itself, (we should of course expect the Nom., like *ἑστῶτες*), it must be solved by supposing the preceding *εἶδον* to lie still in the writer's mind; comp. the like idiom as to the Acc. case, in 4: 2—4. 13: 1—3. 14: 14 al., see Vol. I. § 15. p. 235 seq.

"The great multitude *which no man could number*" is contrasted with the 144,000 just mentioned as a specific number.—*Ἔθνους, φυλῶν, λαῶν*, and *γλωσσῶν*, (comp. on 5: 9), are designed to comprehend all nations, or to designate unlimited universality; they are not to be taken in an individually specific sense, i. e. in one which is numerically accurate. What the writer means is, that great multitudes, gathered from Gentile nations which were spread far and wide as well as from Jews, appeared on this occasion before the throne. Nothing can be more natural. Christianity was everywhere suffering persecution at this time, both from Pagans and Jews. When therefore the angel seals the servants of God in their foreheads, thus giving them a safeguard and a passport, all the martyrs in heaven sympathize with this affecting transaction, and unite in the expression of their joy and thanksgiving. One spirit actuates them all. They see their brethren in Judea to be the

first who were made secure from the persecuting power; for their sufferings had preceded those of others, and had also been much the most protracted. God is now thanked and praised for this interposition of his great mercy. From whatever quarter the martyrs come, by whomsoever their blood was shed, the same splendid robes are given them, and they carry palm-branches in their hands, (so did the victors in the athletic contests of Greece and Rome), as the emblem of their having overcome the world, and continued steadfast even to the end. By mentioning the great number here concerned in this act of thanksgiving and praise, the writer enhances the interest and importance of the scene, and discloses the sympathy which the saints in heaven have with the prosperity of the church on earth. Another object also is answered. In 6: 6—11 it is said, that the number of martyrs must be still more augmented, before the consummation of punishment will arrive. Here we see that the number has been augmenting; more of this augmentation is also disclosed in the sequel.

(10) And they cry with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb.

Σωτηρία, *deliverance*, viz. from the dangers then impending. It has reference here, to the sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads, and of course to the safety that was thus assured to them. The dangers were so great, that nothing but the special favour and protection of God could save the righteous from being destroyed. Comp. in 19: 1 a similar sentiment, after escape from the destruction of Babylon.—Θεῷ καὶ ἀρνίῳ, where, as in nearly all other cases, the same action, or at least a conjoint action, is ascribed to God and the Lamb, viz. the deliverance of the righteous from the power of their enemies.

The sympathy of all the martyrs in heaven with what the church in Judea is doing and suffering, is so perfectly natural that no explanation is needed. Nor does the sentiment that is subjoined require much explanation, when it represents all the heavenly world as participating in the sympathies and hopes of those who are sealed, and in thanksgiving to God who has laid a foundation for these hopes. So the context.

(11) And all the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell upon their faces before the throne, and worshipped God;

Ἑστήκεσαν, third pers. plur. of Pluperf. from ἵστημι. The more usual form of the tense ending in third plur. is—εσαν instead of the normal —εισαν. As the Perf. here has the sense of the Present, (Kühn. § 203. 5), so the Pluperf. has the meaning of the Imperf.; see on the *form*, Kühn. § 175. 5.—Κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων κ. τ. λ. makes it sufficiently plain in the Greek, that the angels are here represented as standing in the *outer* circle of all these; while the English version,

not to leave the point dubious, supplies the preposition *about*, before the words *elders* and *living creatures*. The martyrs are doubtless to be regarded as here associated with the elders; for so v. 9 clearly shows, which represents them as standing *ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου καὶ ἐνώπιον τοῦ ἀρνίου*. I have before called the attention of the reader to the fact, that to the *redeemed* in heaven is given precedence of rank before the ministering angels in general, comp. 1 Cor. 6: 3.

(12) Saying: Amen! Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever!

The same doxology for substance occurs, as we have seen, in 5: 12; see the notes there. But the *order* of the words is different here; and *πλοῦτον* there is exchanged here for *εὐχαριστία*, i. e. *thanksgiving*. There the ascription is *to the Lamb*, here it is *to our God*. The same praise is of course rendered to both. In respect to the *universality* of those who render it, the passage in 5: 11 is the most emphatic and all-comprising.

(13) Then one of the elders accosted me, saying: These, who are clothed with white robes—who are they? And whence did they come?

Καί, in this book, stands at the head of all manner of transitions. Here the transition is so great, that *then* is more appropriate than *and* in English.—*Ἀπεκρίθη . . . λέγων μοι* = וַיַּעַן לֵאמֹר, which is frequent in Hebrew. The verb עָנָה often means *to commence an address*, Ges. Lex. עָנָה No. 2; and the same is true with respect to *ἀποκρίνομαι* in the N. Testament. This is evidently the meaning here.—*Εἷς ἐκ . . .* see on this idiom in 6: 1.

The object of the questions here, on the part of the author, is to bring more distinctly into view the character and state of the martyrs in heaven. The writer seems to have had in his mind the passage in Zech. 4: 4, 5; which will be easily understood by a comparison. But *here*, the manner of the question—as it proceeds from one of the elders—is more striking and peculiar.

(14) And I said to him: My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me: These are they who come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and cleansed them in the blood of the Lamb.

Κύριέ μου, my lord; in our English version, *Sir*. Rightly as to sense; for such is our usual mode of address. But the Hebrew mode was אֲדֹנִי = *κύριέ μου*. *My sir*, our idiom does not permit. *My lord* is merely a respectful mode of address, in the mouth of a Hebrew; although it might be used in a sense higher than simply this; but then the Hebrews said אֲדֹנָי, and not אֲדֹנִי.

Σὺ οἶδας, i. e. I am unable to answer the question, but thou canst easily answer it. The modesty and respect of the seer, in this case, are rendered very palpable.—*Τῆς θλίψεως μεγάλης, the great affliction*,

i. e. persecution even unto death.—Ἔπλυναν, *have washed*, refers to the *white robes* with which they were clothed.—Ἐλεύκαναν, lit. *have made white;* but this primary meaning is incongruous here. To *make white* by washing in *blood* is an inconsistent expression. Of course the secondary sense of the verb, viz. *to cleanse, to purify*, (from the well known rite of cleansing things by blood under the ancient ritual), is the only proper meaning to be assigned to ἐλεύκαναν here. The meaning is, that the Lamb has redeemed them by his blood, and thus conferred on them the honour of being clothed in white. On the use of the Aor. in these two cases, instead of the Perf. (which might have been used), see N. Test. Gramm. § 136. 5. 3, and comp. § 136. 3. Note 2.

(15) Because of this they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sitteth upon the throne will spread his tent over them.

The redeemed are made *kings and priests* to God, 1: 6. Hence, like the priests of old, *they serve him in his temple day and night*, i. e. without cessation.—Σκηνώσει ἐπ' αὐτούς, English version, *shall dwell among them.* But this would be ἐπ' αὐτοῖς. The Acc. here with ἐπί must denote one of two things, viz. either, (*a*) That the glory of God, the Shechinah, כְּבוֹד יְהוָה, should rest *on them* or *over them*, as over the ark of the covenant, and over the tabernacle of old; see Ex. 40: 34 seq. Num. 9: 15—23; or (*b*) That he will erect his tent over them, i. e. receive them into intimate connection and union with him, and afford them his protection. That σκηνόω may mean *to furnish with a tent*, etc., is plain from the nature of the verb; for verbs of this class often have a like meaning; e. g. στεφανόω, *to furnish with a crown*, πτερόω, *to furnish with wings*, etc. Either of the above meanings is good; but, on the whole, I prefer the latter; comp. Is. 4: 5, 6. Ps. 27: 5. 121: 5, 6. Is. 49: 10.

(16) They shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more, neither shall the sun fall upon them, nor any scorching heat.

Οὐ . . . ἔτι and οὐδὲ . . . ἔτι, *no more* or *never . . . never*, is a mode of negation so often repeated in the Apocalypse (comp. 18: 22, 23), that it is somewhat peculiar to this book, in respect to *frequency*, although it is in itself good Greek; see Luke 20: 40. Matt. 5: 13. John 14: 30. Gal. 4: 7. Heb. 8: 12. Buttm. § 149. voc. ἔτι.

Ὁ ἥλιος here designates what we call *the stroke of the sun*, i. e. an excessive solar heat which creates a raging thirst and fever.—Πᾶν καῦμα is generic and includes all kinds of heat, that of the night as well as that of the day. The original idea, however, in Is. 49: 10, which seems to be here alluded to, is a little different; "*No sun nor* שָׁרָב *shall smite them.*" The word שָׁרָב means *mirage*, i. e. that appearance of water,

which is occasioned by heat that makes the vapour exhale from the sandy desert, and which often misleads and destroys the unwary traveller by its deceptive appearance. Whether the writer intended to express this by *καῦμα* here, may possibly be doubtful. I have followed the most simple meaning of the Greek, in the explanation above; but as the Septuagint, in Is. 49: 10, have rendered שָׁרָב by *καύσων* = the Sirocco, there cannot be much objection to the idea, that John may have intended to express the same meaning by *καῦμα*. It is at least very descriptive, and sufficiently appropriate.

(17) For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall lead them, and he will guide them to fountains of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Ἀνὰ μέσον is a phrase of some difficulty. Passow gives to *ἀνά* with the Acc., the same meaning that *ἐν* has with the Dat.; e. g. *ἀνὰ στόμα* = *ἐν στόματι*; and there are many cases where this may be correct. But in the case before us, there may be doubt whether such a sense is admissible. The Lamb is still *standing between the throne and the elders;* of course he was now, while the speaker was contemplating him, not seated on the throne. In Mark 7: 31, we have *ἀνά μέσον τῶν ὁρίων Δεκαπόλεως*, i. e. *over against the limits of Decapolis;* for Decapolis was on the *east* side of the lake of Galilee, and the journey of Jesus from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon to the sea of Galilee (as here asserted), could not possibly be *through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis*, as our English version has it. *Ἀνὰ μέσον* here may have a meaning different from the *ἐν μέσῳ* in Rev. 4: 6. 5: 6; for in the passage before us, it may mean the same as *ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου*, except that it implies *a station opposite* or *over against the middle of the throne*, i. e. directly in front of it. If however the writer be regarded as here declaring, not what the station of the Lamb was at that moment, but what station belonged of right to him, then we may translate: *in the midst*, as I have done in the version above.

Ποιμανεῖ, here not *to feed*, for the imagery is not simply that of a shepherd feeding his flock, although it is borrowed from that source. The last part of the verse shows that another sense of *ποιμανεῖ* is required here, viz. that of *leading, guiding*, as a shepherd does his flock, or as a conductor leads a caravan through the desert where the *mirage* is. This is shown by the next clause, which signifies as much as to say: 'He will not suffer them to be misled and deceived by the שָׁרָב or *καῦμα*, so as to perish with thirst, but will safely guide them to fountains of living water.'—*ζωῆς* is used as an adjective qualifying *πηγὰς ὑδάτων*, and as such is placed between the preposition and the principal noun.

Ἐξαλείψει ὁ θεὸς κ. τ. λ. shows, that the metaphor of a shepherd and

his *flock* is not intended to be continued here. *To wipe away tears* is an action appropriately having reference to *human* beings as such. The meaning of the expression is obvious: 'God will assuage every sorrow, and alleviate every suffering. Complete protection and defence, with the supply of every want and a removal of every woe—shall be afforded to all faithful followers of the Lamb.'

THE TRUMPETS: CHAP. VIII. Seq.

[The servants of God being now secure against impending destruction, all things appear to be in readiness for the execution of justice upon the persecutors of the church. One seal, and one only, remains yet to be broken, of the volume in which their destiny is inscribed; and it seems as if this must introduce the consummation. It is evident that such is represented to be the impression on the great multitude who encircle the throne of God. They stand in silent and awful expectation of the sequel which must take place, when that seal is broken. But the Lord is 'slow to anger and of great mercy, not willing that any should perish, but that all should repent and be saved.' 'Judgment is his strange work;' and delay does not prove that any uncertainty attends the final event. Besides; it had already been declared (6: 11), that *some delay* would take place, until more martyrdoms should be accomplished. Here then the writer introduces various circumstances by which this is aptly brought about. The breaking of the last seal, instead of presenting a single symbol of a single event, is followed by a new series of events which is disparted into *seven* gradations or stages of accomplishment; and these are presented as becoming gradually more and more annoying and destructive to the enemies of the church. *Trumpets*, the usual emblems of war and bloodshed, are chosen as emblems of the series of judgments now to be inflicted. The first four trumpets affect the earth, the sea, the rivers with the springs, and the heavens. The remaining three indicate judgments that fall more immediately upon men.

The present chapter comprises the first four trumpets; and the evils which they introduce occur in the order already named. But before any of the trumpets are sounded, symbols are presented in heaven of the judgments about to take place. The supplication of the saints for the relief of the church comes up before God, along with the incense which is presented before his throne; and the answer that will be made to these supplications is symbolized by the action of an angel, who casts fire down upon the earth, which calls forth thunder, lightning, and earthquake, all indicative of future destruction to the enemies of the church.

Such is the picture before us, and such the plan of the writer by which gradual approach is made to the final catastrophe. Placed in this simple light, there is nothing here which does not become intelligible and significant. Indeed the general design is sufficiently plain to any intelligent reader, who considers well the great outlines of the author's plan.]

(1) And when he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about half an hour.

The reason of this attitude of the Coelicolae has been stated above.

But to make this silence—which is merely the expression of deep and fearful sympathy with the expected sequel—a fulfilment of all which the breaking of the seventh seal indicates, and then to separate the seven trumpets from this seal entirely, as Vitringa and others have done, seems to be wholly overlooking the nature of the writer's plan. But to go even farther still, and make silence, in such circumstances, to indicate *millennial* rest and peace, seems quite to exceed the bounds of credibility. Yet Vitringa (pp. 319 seq.) has done this; and Beda and others have supposed this silence to indicate the rest of the church after the destruction of Antichrist, (Vitringa ut supra, p. 326). How can the silence of *half an hour* appropriately indicate the *long rest* of the Millennium? Vitringa answers this question by remarking, that 'half an hour seemed to John a very long time, when waiting for a catastrophe.' But even if there were any good ground for such a remark, a method of exegesis which breaks up or confuses the regularity of plan and development in the writer's Epopeé, is wholly inadmissible.

(2) And I saw the seven angels who stand before God; and seven trumpets were given to them.

The writer does not say merely *seven angels*, but τοὺς ἑπτὰ ἀγγέλους, THE *seven angels*. The reader is referred to Rev. 1: 4, with the notes and Excursus, for the illustration of this passage. *The seven presence-angels* are doubtless denoted here. Whether this number was borrowed, as has been affirmed, from the *seven counsellors* of the Persian king, (Ezr. 7: 14), or from other sources, it matters not; comp. Tobit 12: 15. It is at all events an ancient mode of designating the number; and that it was familiar to the minds of the ancient Jews, appears from the passage in Tobit to which reference is made.

Seven *trumpets*, because the sounding of the trumpet is the usual signal of battle and of slaughter. By whom these trumpets were given to the angels, is not said. Nor is it at all necessary to particularize in such cases, in a composition like the present. Of course they were given by the direction of Him who sat upon the throne.

(3) And another angel came and stood by the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given him much incense, that he should place it, with the prayers of all the saints, upon the golden altar that was before the throne.

Ἐστάθη, *placed himself*, used like the middle voice; Buttm. § 136. —Λιβανωτόν, lit. *frankincense*, the same as λιβανός, and named from *mount Lebanon*, where the tree grows which produces the gum. Here, however, the word plainly means the *pan* or *small vessel* in which the incense was placed and burned, i. e. *a censer*. The usual appropriate name for such a vessel was λιβανατρίς; see in Phryn. sub verbo, ed. Lobeck.—Δώσῃ, *put* or *place*, like נָתַן; and thus often in the N. Testament.

The nature of the representation supposes a temple in heaven, like that on earth, in which God dwells, and where he is worshipped, as in his earthly temple, by offering incense before him.—*Ταῖς προσευχαῖς τῶν ἁγίων πάντων* presents some difficulty, at first. But in Rev. 5: 8, the twenty-four elders are represented as "each having golden bowls filled with incense, *which are the prayers of the saints*," i. e. plainly, which symbolize the prayers of the saints. Thus is it with the angel here. The incense is the symbol of prayers which ascend to God and find acceptance. So Ps. 141: 2, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense." The sweet savour of the incense is indicative of its being grateful or acceptable; see Gen. 8: 21. At the temple, the multitude of worshippers were accustomed *to pray*, while incense was burned; Luke 1: 10. The Dat. *ταῖς προσευχαῖς κ. τ. λ*, I regard as a Dat. indicating the *manner* or the *circumstances* in which the incense is presented. It is accompanied by the prayers of the saints. It goes up before God, bearing along with it on its fragrant clouds (so to speak) the prayers of persecuted Christians. It is the *angel-intercessor* who presents these; see Exc. I. *Good Angels*, No. 6. No serious difficulty exists, when the passage is viewed in this light.

Ewald understands the Dat. *προσευχαῖς* to be here a *Dativus commodi*. This would vary the shade of the meaning, but not the substance. As he paraphrases it the sentiment would run thus: 'Much incense is placed on the altar, to aid the prayers of all the saints, i. e. to render them more acceptable to God.' On the whole I prefer the other interpretation as agreeing best with Rev. 5: 8. The Exc. named above will show the reader how common the idea of *angel-intercessors* was among the Jews, who were supposed by them to present the prayers of the pious to God.

(4) And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up from the hand of the angel before God.

The angel is supposed to take his stand by the altar of incense, and to set down his censer upon it, but still to keep hold of the vessel with his hand, while the fire, which is put to the contents of the censer, sends up volumes of sweet vapour or smoke *from the hand* of the angel thus continuing his hold upon the censer.

Having completed the symbol of the intercession, the author now proceeds to exhibit another symbol, indicative of the consequences which would follow.

(5) And the angel took the censer and filled it from the fire of the altar, and he cast [the fire] upon the earth; and there were loud thunders, and lightnings, and earthquake.

Εἴληφεν used as Aorist; see, on this use, the remarks under 5: 7.

The model of this symbol is in Ezek. 10: 2 seq.; where, however, the fire is taken from between the cherubim under the throne, and scattered over the city of Jerusalem, as an emblem of its destruction. So here; the fire from the altar, cast down upon the earth, of course indicates that the land on which it falls is to be consumed or destroyed. The additional symbols of thunder, lightning, and earthquake, leave no room for doubt as to the meaning of this symbolical transaction. The prayers of the saints are accepted; consequently the power of persecutors is about to come to an end.—*φωναὶ καὶ βρονταί*, see on 4: 5.

(6) And the seven angels, who had the seven trumpets, made themselves ready that they might sound [them].

Ἡτοίμασαν ἑαυτούς, i. e. assumed the attitude of readiness to blow the trumpet.—*Ἵνα σαλπίσωσι = σαλπίζειν*; see Gramm. § 162. 3. Note 2. The Aor. form here used belongs to the later Greek; old Aor. Subj. *σαλπίγξω*.

After the indications thus given, as to what the will of Heaven was in respect to persecutors, no further delay was to be expected. All is now ready for the commencement of final action.

(7) And the first [angel] sounded, and there was hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of the earth was burned up, and the third part of the trees was burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

The passage of the O. Testament which closely resembles this, is in Ex. 9: 22—25, comp. Ps. 78: 47, 48. In Ex. 9: 24 it is said, that "fire was mingled with the hail." But here "the hail and fire are mingled with blood." By *blood* we must naturally understand, in this case, a shower of coloured rain, i. e. rain of rubedinous aspect; an occurrence which is known sometimes to take place, and which, like falling stars, eclipses, etc., was viewed with terror by the ancients, because it was supposed to be indicative of blood to be shed. The neut. plur. *μεμιγμένα* follows (as often in such cases) the gender of the nearest noun, *πῦρ*; the sing. number could not be used here, because the participle refers both to *χάλαζα* and *πῦρ*.—*Ἐβλήθη*, i. e. the mixture, *μεμιγμένα*, was cast upon the earth; or *ἐβλήθη* may be connected in syntax with the nearest of the two nouns, *πῦρ*; as is often the case, even when the verb relates to two or more subjects, while, in respect to form or number, it conforms only to the last of the two.

Τὸ τρίτον . . . κατεκάη, evidently a definite quantity for a considerable one. The use of this number (a third) is very frequent in the Apocalypse; see in vs. 8—12, also 9: 15, 18. 12: 4. But such a usage is not new. The model is in Ezek. 5: 2, 12. So in Zech. 13: 8, 9. The same usage is common in the Rabbinic writings. The *herbs* and

trees are here mentioned as being destroyed by the hail and fire, just as in Ex. 9: 25.

(8) And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and a third part of the sea became blood.

The image here is that of a volcanic mountain cast into the ocean, by which the waters are discoloured, or turned red. The original of this picture in the main is in Ex. 7: 20—25. But the image of the *burning mountain* is new, and appropriate to John.

(9) And a third part of the creatures in the sea, which have life, perished; and a third part of the ships were destroyed.

Comp. Ex. 7: 21 for the first part of this verse.—*Τὰ ἔχοντα* here is the neuter plural Nom. agreeing with *κτισμάτων* Gen. plural. Such a construction in a *participial* clause is quite common; see Gramm. § 72. 1. *Τὸ τρίτον τῶν πλοίων διεφθάρησαν.* Here the third pers. plur. of the verb is employed, because *τρίτον* is a generic noun. This imagery is peculiar to John, and is not found in Ex. 7: 20—25.—A *third part* is designated, in this case, with the same meaning as before. The whole symbol imports, that destruction awaits the persecutors of the church, on the sea as well as on the land.

(10) And the third angel sounded, and there fell from heaven a great star, burning like a lamp; and it fell upon a third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters.

The image of *falling stars* we have already found, in 6: 13. These were apparently smaller bodies than the burning mountain, and so might fall into rivers and fountains. That the writer had a comet here in view, as Eichhorn and Heinrichs suppose, does not seem to be probable. The image is taken from the blazing meteors, which often appear in the atmosphere, and which do actually fall upon the earth. But the *mischief* which the star occasions, in this case, is an idea that is purely poetic.

(11) And the name of the star is called *Wormwood;* and a third part of the waters become wormwood, and many men died by reason of the waters, because they were bitter.

The poisonous quality ascribed to the star in this case, seems to result from a designed analogy to the effects of the second trumpet, where the waters are turned to blood. Here the quality of the waters into which the star falls, becomes such as is found at times in the desert and morasses, of which unwary and thirsty travellers sometimes drink so as to bring on dangerous diseases. How *one* star could affect so many rivers and fountains, it would hardly belong even to the rhetorician to inquire; for in such a poetic representation as this, a liberty of such a

nature is nothing strange. Evidently the author supposes the star to have fallen upon the *sources* of springs and rivers.

Ὁ ἄψινθος is anomalous in respect to gender, for in common Greek usage it is *feminine*. But as the *herb* ἄψινθος is not here meant, but a *star*, it is probable that the change of gender is a matter of design. Moreover it is not very common to put the *article* before the noun which follows a verb of *naming*; but still, this usage is sometimes followed even in the classics, as well as in this book; see Gramm. § 89. 7. The Hebrew word לַעֲנָה (Prov. 5: 4) is rendered ἀψίνθιον by Aquila; and the poisonous effects of this herb may be seen by comparing Jer. 9: 15. 23: 15. Lam. 3: 15, 19. Deut. 29: 18. Heb. 12: 15. See also in Ex. 15: 23, where the waters of *Marah* (bitterness) are represented as not being drinkable. Of the poisonous quality of the ἄψινθος here named, there can be no doubt; that is, no doubt can be entertained, that the author viewed the subject in this light.

The destruction of *men* commences with this *third* trumpet; but only in a moderate degree. Only one third part of the rivers and fountains are poisoned by the star; and only πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, who drank of these, are destroyed, i. e. as we say, *many persons*, a considerable number, perished.

(12) And the fourth angel sounded, and a third part of the sun, and a third part of the moon, and a third part of the stars, was smitten, in order that a third part of them might be darkened, and the day might not shine as to a third part thereof, and the night likewise.

The original of this picture may be found in Ex. 10: 21—23. But here are special characteristics which belong to the author only. A third part of all the luminaries being eclipsed, a gloomy and ominous light would of course be diffused over the earth, which would fill the inhabitants with consternation; as eclipses always did in former times, whether partial or total. The idea is not, that one third part of the time or length of the day, etc., was totally dark—but that the luminaries by day and night were shorn of one third part of their usual splendour; although, at first view, the latter part of the verse would seem to intimate the former meaning.

Ἡ ἡμέρα . . . τὸ τρίτον αὐτῆς, i. e. as to a third part of its accustomed light. Τὸ τρίτον αὐτῆς is epexegetical, and is to be considered as in the Acc. abs. adverbial.—Καὶ ἡ νὺξ ὁμοίως, i. e. καὶ ἡ νὺξ [μὴ φαίνῃ τὸ τρίτον αὐτῆς] ὁμοίως, the phrase being brachylogical or elliptic. The meaning is, that the moon and stars, which give light by night, were deprived of one third part of it, in like manner as the sun, so that the night had but two thirds of its usual light.

Thus are completed the four *preparatory* symbols, which annoy and terrify men, rather than destroy them to any great extent. But the

execution of divine justice is now to commence, with deeper tones of indignation and scourges more highly lifted up. Yet before this is done, a herald, flying through mid-air, makes a solemn proclamation to the world of that which is about to take place.

(13) And I looked, and I heard an eagle, flying in mid-air, saying with a loud voice: Woe! woe! woe! to those who dwell in the land, by reason of the remaining sounds of the trumpet of the three angels who are yet to sound.

Ἑνός, used as a pronoun indefinite; see on εἷς under 5: 5.—Ἀετοῦ, *an eagle.* But does this mean merely the bird itself? Or does the author intend to signify, that an angel, moving as swiftly as an eagle, flies, or with wings like an eagle's, passes, through the air? The latter, I doubt not; for the writer immediately says: λέγοντος φωνῇ μεγάλῃ κ. τ. λ. This would be incongruous, in case we consider ἀετοῦ as a mere bird. In Is. 21: 8, the watchman cries out אַרְיֵה, i. e. *as a lion*, for it is the Acc. of manner, quasi *lion-wise.* Here the angel, furnished with *eagle-wings*, (the swiftest and most powerful of all wings), moves through mid-air solemnly to proclaim the approaching catastrophe, so as to inspire terror, and give warning to all.—Μεσουρανήματι, usually the *meridian*, but here plainly *the mid-air.* Οὐρανός, like שָׁמַיִם, frequently means the *air*, i. e. the space between the sky and the earth. Borne aloft, then, midway between earth and sky, this heavenly messenger proclaims to the world the approaching doom of persecutors.

FIRST WOE-TRUMPET: CHAP. IX. 1—12.

[The three remaining trumpets are usually designated by the name of the *woe-trumpets*, in reference to the proclamation of woes, as mentioned in 8: 13. The nature of the *first woe* may be explained in a few words.

In the eastern world, over most of the countries of hither Asia, the appearance of locusts in great numbers was with good reason dreaded as a great calamity. Drought, famine, and pestilence, were the usual accompaniments. Drought favoured the multiplication and progress of the locusts; famine was the necessary consequence of their destroying all vegetation; and pestilence was bred by the destruction (sooner or later) of unnumbered multitudes of these rapacious and fetid animals. A most vivid and glowing, as well as sublime, description of an invasion by locusts, is given by Joel in chap. ii. His excited imagination views them as advancing like a mighty overwhelming army, covering every part of the land, thrusting themselves into every habitation, and spreading destruction on every side. Their noise is like that of chariots upon the mountain tops; all faces turn pale; the earth quakes before them; the sun and moon are darkened; the stars withdraw their light; the Almighty God marches at the head of this his countless host, clothed with terror; the great and terrible day of his judgment is come. The garden of Eden is before this army as they advance, and behind them a desolate wilderness.

Many traits of this vivid picture by Joel are transferred to the description now before us. Yet there is nothing that borders on mere imitation in our author. Besides a regard to the representation of Joel, it is manifest that John's mind is also affected by a view of the ninth plague of Egypt, i. e. the plague of the locusts, as exhibited in Ex. 10: 12—15. But there, as well as in the prophet Joel, the locusts are presented in their appropriate and natural character, viz., as consumers or destroyers of the vegetable productions of the earth. But this is not their office in the Apocalypse. The writer had already (6: 5—7) introduced *famine* as one of the judgments which is connected with the breaking of the third seal. His present object is, to designate the punishment more immediately inflicted upon the *persons* of men.

In accordance with this design, the locusts are not commissioned against the trees and herbage (9: 4), but to injure those "who have not the seal of God upon their foreheads." For the accomplishment of this end, they are furnished with teeth like those of a lion (v. 8), and with a sting in their tails like that of a scorpion (v. 10). In this respect, therefore, they are peculiar to our author, and entirely a conception of his own; although many traits of the picture resemble those found in the descriptions of locusts exhibited by other writers. Yet, lest the final catastrophe should be hastened faster than the plan of the writer admits, the wounds which they inflict are not mortal, (for how then should any escape with life?) but only painful in the extreme, occasioning agony like that which a scorpion inflicts when he strikes a man, v. 5.

To make the description more terrific, these new and unheard of armies of locusts are not the offspring of those which are produced in the natural course of things, but they come from the principal source and seat of all that is evil and abominable and dreadful—from the *bottomless pit* or *abyss*, where Satan and evil spirits reign. That horrid place is fraught with all that can hurt or destroy men; and when once it is unlocked, there issues from it, in one form or another, *monstra ingentia*, *malefica*, to plague and to lay waste the earth. In the present case, Apollyon himself, i. e. אַבַדּוֹן or *the Destroyer*, leads on and directs the hosts of tormentors, commissioned against the enemies of the church. Their commission, however, is but for a short time. As common locusts perform their work of destruction in about five months, and then die off or remove, so, in order that some general analogy may be presented, the author limits the time of the locusts, which issue from the abyss, to the same period. The number of months need not be *literally* understood; it should be taken in a symbolical sense; and as meaning but a comparatively short period. The shape of the sentiment seems to be plainly thus: 'As the natural locusts commit their ravages only for five months, so the ravages of these symbolical ones will be only for a short period.'

One other remark is proper. As the author has here plainly gone out of the world of nature into that of imagination, in order to obtain materials wherewith he may draw his picture, so we are not to tax him with *incongruities* or *monstrosities*, because he does not confine himself within the bounds of natural verisimilitude. Beings purely imaginary in some respects he means to present; beings endowed with powers unknown in the natural world his imagination forms; and to compare the progeny thus ushered into symbolical existence with simple and mere natural objects, would be most evidently to do him injustice. That he should make his own picture consistent with itself, and even preserve natural verisimilitude where he can do so without marring his own particular design, is all that we can reasonably demand of him in a case of this nature. And this demand he has met and satisfied.

Allowing, now, that the general view here taken of the plague of the locusts is correct, it follows that all attempts historically to apply this part of the Apocalypse to the *Zealots* in Judea, as Eichhorn, Heinrichs, and some others have done, are quite out of place. They appeal to the history of the Sicarii in Josephus, Bell. Jud. II. 17. IV. 7. V. 2, in confirmation of their views. But one circumstance alone is enough to remove all probability from their interpretation; which is, that the locusts are not commissioned to *kill*, but only to *plague* men. Did not that band of Assassins, the Zealots, *kill* men as well as plague them? Was not *death* the usual consequence of provoking their enmity? Besides, who could expect, after all which has of late been done to cast light on the general nature of the apocalyptic symbols, to find such writers as Eichhorn, Herder, and Heinrichs, making such a specific and individual historical application of it? The case before us is one which is specially fitted, to show the incongruity of such a method of exegesis.]

(1) And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth; and there was given to him the key of the bottomless pit.

To call an angel *a star*, is not new, nor without precedent; although we find the like appellation, when given to *rational* beings, commonly in the plural number, or at least used as a noun of multitude. In Job 38: 7, the angels are called *the morning stars;* and often in the O. Testament, the phrase *host of heaven*, צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם, means the *angels*, as in 1 K. 22: 19. 2 Chron. 18: 18. Ps. 148: 2. Josh. 5: 14; and often it also means the *stars*, Is. 34: 4. 40: 26. 45: 12. Jer. 33: 22. These passages show, that these two very different classes of beings were still occasionally designated by the same name. Not improbably this originated in part from the supposition, that the stars had their appropriate *guardian-angels*, so that the same name might, as in many similar cases, stand for both. So the matter seems to be considered and treated in the book of Enoch; which in 18: 16, says: "The stars which roll over fire, are those which *transgressed* the commandment of God . . . for they came not in their proper season." The like also in chap. 21: 3—6. 85: 1—87: 5. 89: 32, 33. All these passages, taken as a whole, make the usage in question quite clear. By a figure similar to this in Rev. 4: 5, the presence-angels are called *burning lamps;* and in Is. 6: 2, the שְׂרָפִים probably have their name from שָׂרַף, *ardere*, and so שְׂרָפִים means *ardentes* or *lucentes*. In all these cases one simple idea lies at the basis, viz., that of *splendour, resplendence*. But the epithet *stars* is the noblest and most significant of all.

That *star* means *angel*, in the text before us, is sufficiently plain from the sequel: *The key of the bottomless pit was given to him;* surely not to a *literal* star, for this would be such an incongruity as cannot well be imagined, and certainly not to be charged upon John, so long as any other rational exegesis is practicable.

Κλείς, *key*, the ensign of power in cases like that in Rev. 3: 7; but here, a kind of literal sense is appropriate. The abyss is regarded as

locked up, in order to prevent its contents from emerging and destroying the earth. Its mouth is here supposed to be narrow, like that of a well or cistern; and then it is also closed by a curb and door (after the same similitude), to which a lock making it secure is attached. The angel who descends as the minister of divine justice, is commissioned to unlock or open the mouth of the great abyss, in order that the ensuing plague might come forth, and overspread the land. Like images in respect to the condition of Sheôl may be found in Ps. 30: 10 (9). Is. 14: 15. Is. 5: 14, and in Enoch 54: 12. As to the *doors* or *gates* of the under-world, comp. Ps. 9: 13. Is. 38: 10. Matt. 16: 18. Rev. 20: 1—3.

Τοῦ φρέατος, pit, well, is sufficiently explained by what has already been said respecting the entrance to the *great abyss* or under-world, which was supposed to be narrow, and to terminate, at the entrance into the upper-world, by a *door* or *gates*.—*Τῆς ἀβύσσου*, i. e. *τῆς ἀβύσσου χώρας*, for the word *ἄβυσσος* is an adjective in itself. However, it is here and elsewhere employed as a noun. It means *bottomless*, or *without bottom*, i. e. that which is so deep that it cannot be sounded or measured, extending downwards indefinitely into the bosom of the earth.

From this dreary region, the place to which evil spirits are sometimes sent, when they are confined and subjected to any special punishment, (Rev. 20: 1—3. Luke 8: 31. 2 Pet. 2: 4), the plague of the locusts issues. And certainly all this is very appropriate to the writer's purpose. The dread of such a plague, issuing from such a place, must naturally be supposed to be very great.

(2) And he opened the bottomless pit; and there went up a smoke from the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun was darkened, and the air, by the smoke of the pit.

Καπνὸς ἀνέβη. The popular ideas of Hades or the great Abyss were perhaps formed from, or at least produced by, well known facts respecting volcanoes, which throw up an immense mass of fire from the bowels of the earth; for such facts must have been well known all around the Mediterranean, where was an Etna and a Vesuvius, and in more ancient times, not improbably many smaller volcanoes. It does not contradict this idea, that the under-world was also conceived of as being a place of extreme darkness; e. g. Job 10: 21, 22, where this is stated with great force; Ps. 88: 12. So *fumeus Acheron*, in Val. Flacc. 4. 595. Sheôl was conceived of as being immense in its extent, and having, like many caves in the earth into which men can enter, various sinuosities and apartments branching off, into which the fires in another and different place could not throw their gleams. Besides, here was confined the dark conglomerated smoke that issued from the fire, and which would contribute much to augment the general gloom; comp. Rev. 14: 11, "The

smoke of their torments ascendeth up forever and ever," i. e. the smoke which torments them, or which arises from their tormenting fire, is always ascending, or is never discontinued. But in this under-world, the condition of all was not supposed to be the same. In some respects, indeed, there was not even a resemblance. In a world so immense, there was naturally supposed to be room for a great diversity of situation. That part of the under-world, however, where Satan and his coadjutors dwelt, or at least where they were occasionally confined, was a mixture of darkness and smoke and fires that were in a measure occult for want of access to the air; and consequently the idea of the ἄβυσσος in which Satan dwelt, is one fraught with terror and disgust.

I have dwelt more particularly on the explanation of this, because Bochart (Hieroz. II. p. 495) explains the smoke in this case, by a reference to the fires which the husbandmen kindle in order to destroy the locusts; and Eichhorn, by a reference to the clouds of locusts so dense and large, that they cut off the light of the sun, like the thickest smoke in the atmosphere. Both explanations seem to me quite inept; they are in fact incongruous with the representation of the author.

That *the sun and air were darkened*, is a natural consequence of such a volume of smoke as is here described.

(3) And from the smoke issued forth locusts upon the earth, and power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Here the locusts are presented, not as causing the smoke or darkness, as Eichhorn supposes, but as *issuing from the smoke*. Having dwelt in it while in the abyss, they come forth along with it from the mouth of the pit; a spectacle truly of horror, and more especially so, as they are not locusts of the ordinary kind, which have little or no power to harm men, but are armed with stings like those of scorpions; for this is meant by saying, that they have power like that of scorpions, comp. vs. 4, 5. It is indeed true, that locusts often appear in the oriental regions, in such numbers as to darken the air, and cut off the light of the sun; comp. Ex. 10: 15. Joel 2: 2, 10; yet such is not the nature of the representation here.

Οἱ σκορπίοι τῆς γῆς, *land-scorpions*, so named here, in distinction from the so-called *sea-scorpions*, described by Bochart, Hieroz. II. p. 635.

(4) And it was said to them, that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green herb, nor any tree, but the men who have not the seal of God upon their foreheads.

Common locusts destroy every kind of vegetation; and with this their power of active injury ceases. Grass, trees, and every species of plant, fall before them, i. e. they are stripped of every leaf and bud, and often even decorticated. But these locusts from the bottomless pit, à *γένος*

νεὸν καὶ παράδοξον, are designed to accomplish an object wholly different. Passing by the natural productions of the earth, their appropriate food, human beings become the objects of their attack.

After *εἰ μή* the verb *ἀδικήσωσι* must be mentally supplied—*they should not hurt the grass*, etc., *but* [should injure] *men*, etc. This idiom in respect to *εἰ μή* is quite common in the N. Testament; e. g. in Luke 4: 26, *εἰ μὴ* [*ἐπεπέμφθη*] *εἰς Σάρεπτα*; 4: 27, *εἰ μὴ* [*ἐκαθαρίσθη*] *Νεεμάν*. John 17: 12, *εἰ μὴ* [*ἀπώλετο*] *ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας*. And so oftentimes al. loc.

(5) And it was given to them, that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man.

In what way this injury was to be inflicted, is not here said; but it may be found in v. 10 below—*ἔχουσιν οὐρὰς ὁμοίας σκορπίοις*. Even the wounds of scorpions are not usually fatal, unless they are neglected; but the poison is so acrid, that it occasions great agony. Like to this are the images of the hornet, the bee, and the wasp, in the O. Testament; e. g. Deut. 7: 20. Ex. 23: 28. Joshua 24: 12. Deut. 1: 44. Ps. 118: 12. Nor is the *scorpion*, as the symbol of atrocious and merciless men, a new image; see Ezek. 2: 6; comp. Bochart, Hieroz. II. pp. 632—645.—*Παίσῃ*, *may strike*, in reference to the vehement thrust of the scorpion's tail, when it inserts its sting.

Μῆνας πέντε. The usual time of locusts is from May to September inclusively = five months. Here the natural traits of the locusts' history are preserved. The meaning must be, a short period. As to the designation of *five* months, rather than of any other small number, it is enough to say, that it is a period which is doubtless chosen in reference to the usual period of the locusts' depredations.

(6) In those days men shall seek death, and shall not find it, yea they shall long to die, but death shall flee from them.

As to the fact, that distress or agony may be such, that death will be earnestly desired, it is a matter of almost every day's experience; comp. Jer. 8: 3, and Job 7: 16. 10: 1. Rev. 6: 16, 17. This verse sets forth the *βασανισμός* in a very vivid manner, and shows how exceedingly intense it was.

The use of the Fut. tense in this verse, is rather striking. Why does the writer here go into the future, when he represents all as passing under his own eye while in vision or ecstasy? One reason may be, the length of the period which here intervenes between the commencement and completion of this woe, i. e. five months. It is certain however, that there are in this book, as is common everywhere in Hebrew poetry, changes of tense without any other apparent ground than for the sake

of variety. They may be the result of a natural inclination to the Hebrew usage; comp. Rev. chap. xviii, where the different classes of mourners over the same event, viz. the fall of Babylon, make use of the Fut. tense, v. 9; of the Pres. tense, v. 11; and of the Praeterite, v. 17; and the like of this may be found elsewhere. But in the present case, what is now described is *future* to what has just been described; and besides this, what would be often done, on a condition mentioned, is here set forth. The Fut. is in place.—*Φεύξεται*, Fut. Midd. used as a Fut. Active; and this is the case in regard to a large part of the more usual irregular verbs, such as *εἰμί*, *λαμβάνω*, *γιγνώσκω*, *θνήσκω*, *χαίρω*, *θαυμάζω*, *γελάω*, and many others; N. Test. Gramm. § 60. 5. Note.

In *καὶ ἐπιθύμ.*, *καί* may be rendered as intensive, for such is the sentiment; the last *καί* means *and yet* or *but*.

(7) And the forms of the locusts were like to horses ready for war; and on their heads, as it were crowns like to gold; and their faces like the faces of men.

Ὁμοιώματα, like the Hebrew דְּמוּת in Ezek. 1: 16, 26, stands here in the sense of *formae*, *species*, and denotes a *form* or *likeness* which is to be compared with some other form in order fully to perceive its true nature. As to the *resemblance* of the locusts in itself considered, there might easily be made out several traits. The *galloping* motion of the locust is one; the *rictus capitis* is another; the rapid movement is another; the noise made in eating their food is another; see Bochart, Hieroz. II. p. 474 seq. Oedmann, Samml. zur Naturkunde, Fascic. II. pp. 76—149. Volney, Voyage en Syrie, I. p. 277. Joel has presented the same image and comparison, in 2: 4. In each of the three clauses in this verse, the verb of existence is implied.

Crowns like to gold probably means the *horns* (antlers, feelers) of the locust, tipped with yellow, i. e. with a golden colour; and these are in all probability here called *crowns*, to show that they are emblems of victorious and irresistible march. See their march fully described in Joel 2: 7—9. Eichhorn and Heinrichs find *helmets* in these golden crowns. But the explanation just given is adopted by Ewald, and it seems most natural and congruous. In Rev. 13: 1, the *crowns* are represented as on the *ends* of the ten horns. So probably here.

Πρόσωπα ἀνθρώπων must of course be limited to some particular features only. The formation and prominence of the eyes and of the forehead have resemblance to those of men. I apprehend the meaning of the writer to be, that they wore the aspect, in their eyes and faces, of truculent and ruthless soldiers in battle.

(8) And they had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like those of lions.

There are ~~a great~~ many species of locusts, and some of them are hairy. So Jer. 51: 27, סֻלָּם סָעָר, *the locust bristling with hair.* Eichhorn says: "Coma deest in veris locustis;" in which, as the passage just quoted shows, he was much mistaken. Of course John would here choose that species of locust for comparison, which was of the most atrocious aspect.—*Ὡς τρίχας γυναικῶν*, refers of course to the *abundance*, not to the quality, of their hair.

Ὡς λεόντων ἦσαν finds its model in Joel 1: 6, where the same comparison is repeated twice. The meaning is, that the teeth are such as are adapted to bite and wound in a very effectual manner; for such are the teeth of a lion.

(9) And they had breast-plates like iron breast-plates; and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots of horses rushing into battle.

The breasts-plates are to be referred here to the hard and firm cuticle on the fore-part of the locust, which serves as a shield while it moves among the thorny and furzy vegetation; *armavit natura cutem*, Claudian, 83. 2, 3.—The noise of the locusts when they move, is spoken of by almost all travellers. Joel has magnificently described it, 2: 4, 5.

Φωνὴ ἁρμάτων . . . εἰς πόλεμον. The succession of Genitives here somewhat embarrasses the reader. We may render *ἁρμάτων ἵππων*, by *horse-chariots;* for these are distinguished from chariots drawn by mules, or other beasts of burden; and whether we take *ἁρμάτων* or *ἵππων* as an adjective, matters not as to the substance of the sense; for *horse-chariots* and *chariots of horses*, i. e. drawn by horses, are the same. Ewald thinks *ἵππων* spurious, because he finds difficulty in making out an appropriate sense from it. It does not seem to me, however, to labour under any serious difficulty. There is still another way of construing the sentence: Like the noise of chariots, while many horses rush into the battle; thus making the last clause a Gen. absolute. But the use of the Gen. absolute in this book, is scarcely to be found; and if adopted here, would not give any very tolerable sense. There might be horses rushing to battle without any chariots, i. e. *cavalry* such as is usual. The real idea of the author is not obscure; and it is given, as it seems to me, in the translation above.

Locusts, while they are young, fly but short distances at a time, like our grass-hoppers; but when fully grown, they will sustain a flight of some considerable distance. Their wings make a shrill tinkling noise; and since the air is sometimes filled with these animals so thickly that day is turned into night, (which is really the case), the descriptions in John and in Joel appear very appropriate and striking.

(10) And they have tails like scorpions; and stings were in their tails; and they had power to hurt men five months.

Here, in the last part of this particular description of the locusts, is developed the secret of their power to injure men, already adverted to but not described in v. 5 above. In this particular they differ from natural locusts, and disclose their origin from the bottomless pit. The writer does not tell us, on what they are supposed to *feed;* for as they are the progeny of the Abyss, they do not need the food of natural locusts. This verse is a resumption of the *action* of the piece as developed in v. 5, which had been suspended a while for the sake of describing the extraordinary nature of these locusts. The reader will note the historic Pres. in ἔχουσιν, and then the change into ἦν. See Gramm. § 136. 1. *b.* Note. As to five months, see on v. 5.

(11) And they have over them a king, the angel of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew is *Abaddon*, and in Greek he hath the name *Apollyon*.

The angel of the bottomless pit would seem here to mean Sammael, i. e. the chief of the evil angels. *Abaddon* lit. *destruction;* but here it means the *destroyer*, (abstract being put for concrete), which in this case is an appropriate name. In Greek, *Apollyon* corresponds and is equivalent. *Abaddon* is also a name sometimes given to Sheôl; e. g. in Prov. 15: 11. Job. 26: 6. The Hebrews seem to have denoted by it the *lowest recesses* of the pit or great abyss; and so the Rabbins employed the word. In Joel, the Almighty God himself leads on his great army (2: 11); but here the king of the abyss is the appointed head. The work is so appropriate to an evil angel, as well as the place from which the army comes, that a πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον seems most probably to be here designated as the leader, rather than any one of the good angels.

(12) The first woe is past; behold! there come yet two woes hereafter.

Lit. *the one woe*, etc.; but our idiom does not well admit such a version here. As to the *speaker* in this verse, the words are those of the seer, and not of the angel, and are designed to give distinct notice of the progress of the catastrophe towards completion. Οὐαί an indeclinable interjection, here employed as a noun sing. feminine, as the article shows.—Ἔρχονται, *are coming*, and so (often) the Pres. is used in a Fut. sense; see Gramm. § 136. 1. *c.*

SECOND WOE-TRUMPET: CHAP. IX. 13—XI. 19.

[The sixth trumpet, or *second woe-trumpet*, is introductory of several important occurrences. That which immediately concerns the progress of the catastrophe is first related. This is, the irruption of an overwhelming army of horsemen, under the guidance of evil demons, whose appropriate work is destruction. Not only are the riders engaged in the work of destroying, but the horses themselves are of such an extraordinary nature, that they breathe out slaughter on every side. Fire and brimstone and smoke issue from their mouth; and like the locusts, they are formed with tails which annoy with deadly violence.

This is the most remote of all the symbols which the author has employed, from the real objects of the natural world. Indeed, the taste of the occidental world can with difficulty accommodate itself to the relish of such imagery; so distant is it from the bounds of natural probability. Yet we know well that the *oriental* world delights in imagery of this nature; as the fictions of Persia, Arabia, and Hindustan, respecting good and evil Genii, abundantly testify. In making up our aesthetical judgment, then, respecting such a scene as that now before us, we must transport ourselves into the eastern world, and judge from the feelings, views, and taste there predominant. There is not elsewhere, in all the Scriptures, anything in the way of symbol which borders so near upon what we usually deem excessive and unnatural, (except perhaps a part of Ezek. i.), as the army of horsemen from the Euphrates. Even the *number* savours of hyperbole; for it is no less than 200,000,000. Such a state of the case, then, puts it out of all question whether we are to find here the mere prototypes of what is to be *literally* verified, or actually to take place as a matter of fact. A simple statement of what is actually said by the author, renders all argument unnecessary to show, that we can rationally suppose nothing more than mere symbol of overwhelming force to be presented here.

'But why is this army brought from the *region of the Euphrates?* It was the *Roman* power, which was to lay waste the land of Judea, and which indeed was already attacking it when the Apocalypse was written. Why then does not the writer bring his army of horsemen from the *West*, and not from the East?'

For two reasons, I would reply, he omits doing this; at least, so the case presents itself to my mind. (1) The principal enemies and oppressors of the Jews, from time immemorial, had ever been from the *east*. Assyria, Babylon, and Syria, had all overrun and laid waste Judea, and carried away great multitudes of captives. The east, moreover, abounded in *cavalry;* and this kind of troops were always the most harassing and destructive in overrunning a country. For this reason we may suppose the author to lay the scene of assembling his army of *horsemen* in the east. (2) It was to be calculated upon, and was matter of actual occurrence, that when Judea was attacked by the Romans, the latter would draw their supplies of troops from the neighbouring oriental countries under their sway. Thus Titus, when left by Vespasian to complete the conquest of Judea, drew troops from Syria and from the Euphrates; Jos. Bell. Jud. V. 1. 5, 6. It will be remembered, that at this time the dominion of the Romans extended to the Euphrates.

Ewald supposes the *Parthians* to be meant by the horsemen, in this case; and that the object attacked was the heathen of Rome and elsewhere. But this con-

founds the first catastrophe with the second; and it would represent the writer as stopping short, when on the very *finale* of his first catastrophe, and changing entirely the whole scene of action, without giving any notice to the reader. There is something so improbable in all this, that it needs very cogent reasons to render it credible. There is, indeed, one circumstance here, which seems to plead for such a construction. This is the continued *idolatry* of those who survive the attack of the horsemen; which seems to be exhibited in v. 20. But as a *literal* sense of this passage does not seem to be necessary; and since the admission of *Gentiles* as the victims of the invading army, would make such entire confusion in the author's plan, I cannot persuade myself that Ewald has given a correct view of the general design of the passage. Something more will be said in relation to this subject, in the commentary which follows.

The account of the horsemen being concluded, the writer next introduces two *episodes*, before he advances to the consummation of the catastrophe. The first is in chap. x, where an angel appears, and makes proclamation in the most solemn manner of the speedily approaching consummation. The great importance of the event about to take place, seems to be the occasion of such an interposition on the part of the angel. At the same time, another purpose is answered by it. John was now brought near the end of his vision, in respect to the book of seven seals. These seals had not only been all broken, but the seven parts or successive series, into which the last seal is divided, are now completed, with the exception of only the final one. The first vision or catastrophe, therefore, must of course be very near its close. But still, the work of the seer is not completed. Other visions besides this are to be presented; other disclosures are to be made. As he has seen depicted, in lively representations, the impending fate of persecuting *Judea*, so he must also see that of the persecuting *heathen* nations. Accordingly the angel who proclaims the completion of the first catastrophe, gives to John a book in which is inscribed the destinies of the heathen, or the progress and consummation of the second catastrophe. With this book he receives the intelligence also, that he must prophesy still farther "respecting people and nations and tongues and many kings," 10: 11. This corresponds so well with chap. xii—xix, that I do not see any good reason to doubt, that the words just repeated have respect to the contents of those chapters.

The seer having been thus prepared still to continue his work after the first part of his prophetic task shall have been finished, nothing would seem to be wanting now, but the finishing or catastrophe itself. Yet, how can the once beloved people of God be destroyed! How can God's dwelling-place at Jerusalem be laid waste, and made the reproach of a scoffing world! As in chap. vii. we have an account of the manner in which *Christians* themselves are secured from impending ruin, so here the security is extended *to all that is truly spiritual and valuable* in the ancient worship. The *externals* of the temple are to be cast down to the ground and trodden under foot by the heathen; but the holy place, and the true spiritual worshippers therein, are to be preserved. Chap. 11: 1, 2.

And now what remains but the *last* trumpet? But still, before it sounds, newly committed and more aggravated crimes are brought to view, in order that all may see the long-suffering of God and the perfect justice of his proceedings. Christian witnesses, clothed with miraculous power, appear in the devoted city. There they exercise their office, for a short time. There they are finally slain, and exposed to open and repeated insult. Their death, however, only gives ultimate triumph to their cause. This is represented by the symbol of the two witnesses rising from the dead and ascending to heaven. A great earthquake succeeds this

event, by which a tenth part of the city is destroyed. The enemies of the church are constrained by terror to confess the hand of God in these events. But the earthquake appears to be principally an appropriate signal of what is to follow, under the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet.

Such are the contents of the second woe-trumpet. The *delay*, which was adverted to in chap. 6: 11, we have found, on various occasions, to be provided for by the writer. This last delay seems, indeed, to be the longest of all. It is natural that it should be so. The *final* stroke is one that requires in all respects entire and ample preparation. The offers of pardon, made during the ministry of the two witnesses, is to be brought into this account; for it is thus that the mind is favourably impressed with the long suffering of God. It is thus too, when justice at last arrives, that we are prepared to be fully satisfied with its demands and its penalties.]

(13, 14) And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet: Loose the four angels who are bound by the great river Euphrates.

Μίαν here = *τίς*, or equivalent to our English indefinite article *a* or *an;* see on *εἷς* under 5: 5.

Ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων κεράτων, where *ἐκ* must be equivalent to *ἀπό*; for the Hebrew מִן corresponds to both. The writer does not mean to say, that the voice went forth *out of* the horns of the altar, i. e. that the horns themselves spake, but that the voice came from the direction of the altar to him; or (if we must insist on *ἐκ*) from the *midst* of the horns, which of course would be in the midst of the altar. In this case, however, if we only suppose the throne of God to stand behind the altar, (as in the temple), then the voice, being spoken from the throne, would come to John as if it were from the altar. I see no objection however to supposing, that the *angel of the altar* here speaks, as the herald of the throne.—*Κεράτων* (see Ex. 27: 2. Amos 3: 14) means the prominences, in the way of ornament, placed upon the four corners of the altar; and which, Maimonides says, were of the form of turrets or pyramids, as they were constructed in the Jewish temple. Hence the name *horns;* comp. Is. 5: 1.

Τῷ ἕκτῳ ἀγγέλῳ, i. e. the sixth angel, who sounded the trumpet, is himself commissioned to execute the threatening which it indicated. *Ὁ ἔχων*, see on *ὁ μάρτυς* under 1: 5, as Nom. case.—*Λῦσον τοὺς . . . Εὐφράτῃ.* That these are evil angels or demons, seems probable from the circumstances. The *air*, the *abyss*, and the *desert*, are the localities of evil spirits, i. e. they were popularly and familiarly spoken of in this manner among the Jews; see Exc. I. *Evil Spirits*, No. 5. * That the desert is one of the places thus assigned, is plain from Is. 13: 21. 34: 14. Rev. 18: 2. Tobit 8: 3. Baruch 4: 35. Enoch 10: 6, 7, and very plainly from Matt. 12: 43; see Exc. ut supra, No. 5. *b.* That *four* angels are here mentioned, must be referred to the same reason as that which led to indicate *four* angels as holding in the winds, Rev. 7: 1, viz.,

it is because the four quarters of the earth, the four winds, etc., are usually spoken of as comprehending every quarter. So here, the army to be raised is conceived of as consisting of four parts, and these will have four commanders (so to speak) coming from every quarter of the desert region whence the troops are to proceed.—As to *δεδεμένους*, this is a familiar idea in the Scriptures, in respect to evil angels who are in a state of special durance or restraint ; comp. 2 Pet. 2: 4. Jude v. 6. Rev. 20: 2—7. In the book of Enoch this is very common ; e. g. Enoch 10: 15—17. 14: 4. 18: 16. 21: 1—6. 53: 1—6. 54: 6—8. 68: 39. 87: 3—5. Comp. 4 Ezra, in Fabricius, Cod. Apoc. V. Test. II. pp. 237—240. Undoubtedly the word *bound*, used in respect to spirits, is to be *tropically* understood. It means, of course, *under restraint;* for when evil spirits are sent to the desert, or to the abyss, they are subjected in this way to special restraint; at least the object of the phraseology is to designate such an idea.—*Τῷ ποταμῷ τῷ μεγάλῳ* is equivalent to the usual expression in Hebrew הַנָּהָר הַגָּדוֹל, which sometimes is accompanied with פְּרָת, *the Euphrates*, as here.

But why the region of the Euphrates? In addition to what has been already said above, it may be here remarked, that in Is. 21: 1, the prophet speaks of the *burden*, i. e. commination or sentence, *of the desert of the sea*, i. e. of the Babylonish region, *sea* being used for the Euphrates, as it is often elsewhere for any large river. In the vicinity of the Euphrates, and westward of it, are vast deserts of sand, and (near the river) of morasses. From this oriental region then, fraught in ancient times with plagues to Judea, is to come this new and unheard of host, who are to trample down and destroy. *Horsemen* are the appropriate and most destructive troops of the East.

(15) And the four angels were loosed, who are prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they may slay a third part of men.

The writer does not say: *ἡτοιμασμένοι ἐν ὥρᾳ κ. τ. λ.* but *εἰς τὴν ὥραν*, etc., i. e. for the particular year, month, day, and hour, destined by God for the great catastrophe which is to follow. The first mode of expression would indicate, that they were prepared for *any* hour, day, etc.; but the latter, i. e. the one in our text, can bear only the sense which I have given it. It matters not whether the meaning of *any* hour, day, etc. be in itself a truth, (as it doubtless is) ; it is enough to say, that this is not what the writer here meant to affirm ; at any rate, it is not what he has said. The phraseology would seem also to intimate, that the executioners of divine justice in this case, (for evil spirits are compelled to perform such a task, comp. 1 Cor. 5: 5. 1 Tim. 1: 20), were confined in a place where they were *kept ready and at hand* (*ἡτοιμασμένοι*), to lead on the army of invasion.

(16) And the number of the armies of horsemen was two myriads of myriads [20,000 × 10,000 = 200,000,000]; I heard the number thereof.

Στρατευμάτων in the plural because of the immensity of the multitude.—*Ἱππικοῦ*, neut. adj. used as a noun, *cavalry;* although it is remarkable that the writer says nothing further of the *horsemen*, excepting that he describes a part of their armour, v. 17. The number of horsemen mentioned here equals one fourth part at least of the human race then existing in the whole world, and probably even more than this. Of course all *literal* exposition of the passage is out of question. *I heard the number thereof*, should be read as in parentheses. The meaning seems of course to be, that he was *told* what the number was; *count* them he could not. The expression before us gives emphasis to the preceding and almost incredible declaration. Some angel-interpreter in this case, we must suppose to have told him the number.

(17) And thus I saw the horses in vision, and those who sat upon them having breast-plates fiery and dark-red and yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions, and from their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

This sentence is somewhat difficult, by reason of the *οὕτως*. On the whole, I cannot but refer it to *what precedes;* and then the meaning of course is, that John saw the army to be such an immense multitude, as he had mentioned, and so conditioned also as to their leaders. Here he separates the horses from their riders; and when he names the latter, he connects with the designation a description of the armour which they wore. A more particular description of the horses is given in a separate clause, which begins grammatically *de novo* as to its construction, but in sense is connected with the preceding clause in the beginning of the verse.

One may, however, understand *οὕτως* here as designating not the manner of seeing, but the manner, i. e. the appearance or form of the horses and of their riders. *Οὕτως* would then mean, *in this condition, in such a state*, etc., viz. in *the one that is described in the succeeding context;* and such is not an unusual meaning of the word *οὕτως*, comp. Matt. 1: 18. 2: 5. John 21: 1. Heb. 4: 4. But the first construction is perhaps more simple.—*Ἐν τῇ ὁράσει* is an express intimation, amidst the narration of *φαινόμενα νεὰ καὶ παράδοξα*, that these are to be regarded merely as objects or symbols seen in an ecstatic state, or in prophetic vision—not as realities of the natural world.

Πυρίνους means of a *fiery hue*, i. e. the paler and more glaring red.—*Ὑακινθίνους* means *deep dark red*, verging toward black.—*Θειώδεις* (a form of the later Greek) is from *θεῖον, sulphur*, and would seem to mean *of a sulphureous hue.* The breast-plates, then, were particoloured; a circumstance not unfrequent among more uncultivated nations; who of-

ten adorn their persons, as well as their armour, in a similar way. The object here seems to be, to make the armour more glaring and terrific.

Ὡς κεφαλαὶ λεόντων, evidently because they are intended to appear as terrific as possible. Under the preceding trumpet, we find a new and singular office assigned to the locusts, and they are armed, therefore, with new powers, vs. 5, 10. So here; the horses are formed so as to fill all with consternation who behold them.—*Καὶ ἐκ τῶν στομάτων . . . θεῖον*. The heathen poets often speak of horses breathing out *fire* and *smoke*, (Virg. Georg. II. 140. III. 85. Ovid. Met. VII. 104); but here is a new image superadded, viz., that of sulphureous exhalation. The idea seems to be, that sulphur burning within them produces material that mixes with their breath, which then, in the form of smoke or vapour, is thrown from the mouth, and, like the fumes of sulphur, destroys life. The reader will not object to this, that it is an incongruity in nature; for the writer himself has just told him, that all is nothing more than the symbols of a *vision*. As the horses themselves are *παρὰ φύσιν*, so their attributes may also be of the like tenor, and they are here represented in fact as being *παρὰ φύσιν*.

(18) By these three plagues were slain a third part of men, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which issued from their mouths.

The form *ἀπεκτάνθησαν* is not Attic, but of the later Greek. Its normal theme must be *κτάνω*, Lex. *κτείνω*.

Here the horses themselves are represented as performing the principal part of the work of destruction. It would seem as if the riders only guided them, and were armed only to inspire terror.—*Ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς κ. τ. λ*, is merely specification, in order to make the preceding clause quite plain.—*Τοῦ ἐκπορευομένου* agrees with the last of the preceding nouns in form, i. e. in number and gender, while in meaning it extends to all three; a construction not unfrequent in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.

(19) For the power of the horses is in their mouths, and also in their tails; for their tails are like to serpents, having heads, and with them they do harm.

Ἡ γὰρ ἐξουσία κ. τ. λ. repeats again, in still another form, the idea that these extraordinary horses, unlike to all others, inflicted deadly wounds by their mouths. The idea is presented here in the shape of *cause* or *ground* of what precedes. But here another trait also, which is new and still more strange, is added. Not only do they breathe out igneous sulphur, but they have, like the *amphisbaena* or two-headed serpent, a head on either extremity; and with both of the heads do they inflict injury. It is said of the amphisbaena, that its tail resembles a head, and with this it throws out poison; Plin. Hist. Nat. VIII. 35. Lucan. IX. 179. Hesych. sub. verbo. See the citations in Wetstein.

Ἔχουσαι κεφαλάς must relate, as the gender now is, to the preceding

οὐραί, and not to ὄφεσιν which is masculine. The meaning is, that the οὐραί assumed the form of heads, as is the case in respect to the amphisbaena; and with these heads they assaulted the enemy, or those attacked by them; whether with poisonous breath, or by the biting of the teeth, is not said. *Monstra horrenda* we may well name them; and these are just what the writer meant to exhibit. The punishment to be inflicted was dreadful, because guilt was greatly aggravated. Of course the instruments of punishment, we may well suppose, must be of an extraordinary nature. The Turcomans and other Orientals train their horses to assault with the hinder part, as well as with the front, see Vol. I. § 10. p. 183.

(20) And the rest of men, who were not slain by these plagues, repented not of the works of their hands, that they might not worship demons, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood, which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk.

Ewald considers this as decisive in respect to those who are the objects of attack by the horsemen. He says 'that they can be no other than *heathen*, the actual worshippers of false gods and of idols.' And if it be absolutely necessary to interpret this in a *literal* way, it must be conceded that his position is unavoidable. But in every case of this nature, it is certainly proper to take into view the context, and the evident general object of the writer. In chap. vii. we find that those who are to be exempted from destruction *are all of the twelve tribes of Israel.* Then again in chap. xi. we find that the temple, as to its exterior, is to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles. Moreover the two witnesses, who appear near the close of the catastrophe, perform their office *in the great city where our Lord was crucified.* Then "a tenth part of this city falls by an earthquake." Nor is there anything, save the verse before us, in chap. vi—xi, which indicates that the *heathen* are here designated as the objects of punishment. It is the second catastrophe, (chap. xii—xix.), which presents *them* as the subjects of divine displeasure.

Unless then we mingle all things in confusion, as it respects the plan of the writer, we cannot admit that the heathen, as such, are here presented to our view. It is sufficiently known to the critical reader, that גּוֹיִם, and ἔθνη, commonly employed in the O. Testament to designate the *heathen*, are also often employed to designate such *Jews* as acted in a *heathenish* manner; e. g. in Is. 1: 4. 9: 2. 26: 2. 49: 7. Gen. 35: 11. 12: 2. Ps. 33: 12. Nor are we destitute of like usage in other cases of a similar nature, even in prosaic moral exhortation; e. g. Col. 3: 5, "covetousness which is *idolatry*;" Eph. 5: 5, "covetous man, who is an *idolater*;" 1 Sam. 15: 23, "Stubbornness is as iniquity and *idolatry* . . . rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." In Zech. 13: 2 is a prediction, that in the Messianic day "*the names of idols* shall be cut off from the

land, and no more remembered; and the prophets and the unclean spirits shall pass out of the land." In the Test. of the twelve Patriarchs, (Judae, c. 23) we find the following declaration: "Much sadness do I have, my son, because of the wantonness and jugglery, and *idolatry* which ye do toward the palace [temple? Greek *εἰς τὸ βασίλειον*], following ventriloquists, and auguries of demoniacal deceit. Your daughters ye make public singers, and you mingle in the abominations of the Gentiles, etc." Now if this prediction came from a Jew of Palestine, which seems quite probable, and if it be contemporary, or nearly so, with the Apocalypse, (of which there is no good reason to doubt), does not this afford proof, that there did exist heathen practices, and a heathen party, among the Jews of that period? In the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, it is well known, there was a considerable party of this character; and under Herod, theatres, and public games, and other heathen customs, had become very frequent in Judea. The Sicarii of Galilee and the Zealots of Jerusalem were surely men of as base and desperate a character as could be found in the world; and amid the confluence of Idumeans and desperadoes, at that time, were there not many, *professedly* Jews indeed, who were *heathen* in their practices?

But be this as it may, it is enough, in order to defend the meaning which I would assign to our text, to show that language of the like nature is elsewhere employed, when *literal* idolatry is not meant. Under the ancient dispensation, the crying sin of the Jews, and the one against which more comminations are uttered than against any other offence, was that of *idolatry*. To say then of those who survived the attacks of the horsemen, that they did not repent, but were still idolaters, would be kindred to what Isaiah (1: 10) says, when he calls the rulers of the Jews *Sodomites*, and addresses the nation with the opprobrious epithet, *people of Gomorrah*. It will not be contended, that the prophet here means to tax them specifically with the crime of *sodomy;* he designs to say merely, that they were excessively wicked. So in the case before us; the remnant (*οἱ λοιποί*) were of a character like that of the ancient idolaters. More than this does not seem to be necessary to satisfy the demands of exegesis; more than this the context does not allow us to assume, unless indeed we have reason to suppose it to be a matter of fact, that among the exceedingly wicked Jews of that period, there were many who actually fell into the practices of the heathen, and engaged in idol-worship. But as this is a somewhat doubtful matter, I should content myself with the other interpretation.

Οἱ λοιποί means those left after one third part had been destroyed by the horsemen.—*Οὐ μετενόησαν ἐκ κ. τ. λ.* so with *ἐκ* after this verb, in Rev. 9: 21 (see Comm.) 16: 11. In Acts 8: 22 with *ἀπό* following the verb. Elsewhere the verb is used in the absolute way. Do not the

phrases before us come from the Hebrew מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו?—*Ἔργων τῶν χειρῶν αὐτῶν*, i. e. works which they had done, another Hebrew idiom, *hand* being the symbol of accomplishment.—*Δαιμόνια* was the name given by the Jews, in the way of contempt, to the heathen gods; comp. 1 Cor. 10: 20, 21.—*Χρυσᾶ κ. τ. λ.* specifies the various materials out of which different idols, for various purposes, were made.—*Ἅ οὔτε βλέπειν . . . περιπατεῖν*, specifications of their qualities designed to render prominent the contempt in which the idols ought to be held; specifications, moreover, drawn from the O. Testament, comp. Ps. 115: 4—7. 135: 15—18. Jer. 10: 3—5. Is. 44: 9—20. But the particular passage, of which the latter part of v. 20 is only a citation, may be found in Dan. 5: 23.

(21) And they repented not of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

It will not be contended that all these crimes were not rife in Judea, at the time when the Apocalypse was written, i. e. during the invasion of Palestine. Above all, *φόνοι* and *κλέμματα* filled the whole country. That the *φαρμακείαι* were frequent, and an object of great abomination to the pious, is plain from Rev. 18: 23. 21: 8. 22: 15. See also in the O. Testament, Ex. 22: 18. Lev. 19: 26. Mic. 5: 12. Is. 2: 6. If the reader wishes to trace more distinctly the history of these times, in respect to the vices that were common, he may consult Josephus, Bell. Jud. IV. 9, 10. V. 9, 4. VI. 2, 1 and 2. VII. 3, 3. Comp. Tac. V. 12.

There is something peculiar in the repetition of *οὐ μετανόησαν* in v. 20, and again in v. 21. Is it the design of the writer, that v. 21 should be regarded as an epexegesis of v. 20? It has somewhat of this aspect; but the case is not sufficiently plain to justify us in positively assuming this ground. That the Jews of the period immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem were wicked and impious almost beyond example—and that such wickedness and impiety are characterized by v. 20th, seems to be a sufficient solution of the language employed, without resorting to the supposition of Ewald.

THE OPEN BOOK: CHAP. X.

That the seer now occupies a new station, (hitherto he had been in heaven), seems manifest from vs. 1, 10. After the angel has descended he speaks with John, v. 9, and John takes the little book from his hand, and is again addressed by the angel. Now inasmuch as the angel was standing upon the margin of the sea and the land (v. 2), the necessary implication is, that John was standing near him. Consequently there must have been a change of position on the part of John, previous to this colloquy between the angel and him.

Such is the case, moreover, in other parts of this book. In one case indeed,

12: 18, we have an express indication of a change of station; and so again in 17: 3. But in general the reader is left to draw his own conclusion, with regard to this, from the nature of the vision and the circumstances with which it is attended. Whether the scenes described in the first part of chap. xi. imply a new vision, different from the present one, will be discussed when we come to the interpretation of that chapter.

The impression made on my own mind by chap. x. is, that the design of it is to show in an impressive manner that the vision respecting the book with seven seals (chap. v.) is now just at its close, that nothing more remains but the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, and that this shall speedily take place, *οὐκέτι χρόνος ἔσται*, v. 6. With this seems also to be joined another object, viz. to introduce this final catastrophe with all the solemnity and demonstration of its importance, which the nature of the case seemed to require. The destruction of the temple and city of God, and also the destruction of the Jewish nation, were events such as cannot often happen, and when they do, it is intended that they shall make a deep impression.

The new commission which John receives (v. 11), seems to be a circumstance which obviously contributes to show, that his former vision of the sealed book was now at its close or completed, and that he needed new directions for the further discharge of prophetic duty. The contents of the book are not sealed. He devours them, i. e. he reads them with avidity, in order that he may know what they contained; and then he is told, that "he must prophesy again respecting many nations and people and tongues and kings." Thus, when the last or seventh trumpet shall have sounded, his task will still proceed; while the scene is entirely changed in respect to those whose destiny is predicted.

(1) And I saw another mighty angel descending from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was on his head, and his visage was as the sun, and his feet like pillars of brass.

Ἄλλον, another, i. e. different from the angels who had the trumpets, and which the writer had before mentioned.—*Ἰσχυρόν*, "epitheton mere ornans," says Eichhorn again. The *mere* I would strike out. That it adds to the splendour of the scene, and makes it more august and striking, to present in this case one of the גִּבּוֹרִים (*ἰσχυροί*) of the heavenly host, who will doubt? And principally for this purpose the epithet seems to be given.—*Περιβεβλημένον νεφέλην*, often said for substance of God and the Saviour, when they are presented in the attitude of motion; see Ps. 18: 11. 104: 3. Is. 19: 1. Ezek. 1: 4. Matt. 24: 30. Rev. 1: 7. So here, the descent of the angel is with great majesty; he is borne along as it were by a bright cloud. Ewald represents the cloud as designed only to veil his splendour. But I think he has mistaken the design of the imagery; comp. Ps. 18: 11.

Ἶρις ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ, comp. Ezek. 1: 28. Rev. 4: 3. The splendour and beauty of his crown or diadem is designated by this striking image. In Rev. 12: 1, the woman clothed with the sun, has a diadem of twelve stars. The different colours of the rainbow here seem to be indicative of the different coloured gems which were ap-

parently in the diadem of the angel.—*Πρόσωπον ὡς ἥλιος*, comp. Rev. 1: 16. Judg. 5: 31. Acts 26: 13. The meaning is, that his visage was exceedingly glorious or resplendent.—*Πόδες ὡς στύλοι πυρός*, i. e. shining, glowing with brightness; comp. in Ezek. 1: 4, 7, 27. 8: 2. Rev. 1: 15.

(2) And he held in his hand a little book opened; and he placed his right foot upon the sea, but his left upon the land.

The reader will note the difference here between *βιβλαρίδιον*, a diminutive, and *βιβλίον* in 5: 1. Not that anything important seems to be attached to the different *sizes* of the books, in this case, but the different appellations seem to be employed principally to designate a difference in the contents of the respective books. Ewald confidently asserts that this *little book* was no other than a repetition in brief of what was in the sealed book of chap. v. 1; Comm. p. 189. But is it not unnatural to suppose, that after the contents of that volume had been already exposed, even to the very last page, that a *repetition* of it should now be here made, at the close? This would seem to be an incongruous contrivance, to say the least. And why is the devouring of this book, i. e. the thorough and eager perusal of it, accompanied with a command to prophesy respecting many nations and kings? v. 11. Surely if there be any analogy between this book and the preceding one, its contents must have respect to the *future*, not to the past. That this future begins where the other book ends, seems altogether a natural and obvious supposition; for why should the past be again repeated?*

* Eichhorn represents the little book as containing only what the angel says in vs. 6, 7; which he supposes to be read by the angel from the little book; Comm. in loc. Heinrichs represents the little book either as being the same as the *βιβλίον* in 5: 1, or else a summary of its contents. Vitringa supposes the little book to contain only the calamities that were to befal the church under the sixth trumpet. So, for substance, does Bengel also decide. Mede, on the contrary, separates the second book entirely from the first; and with good reason, as it seems to me; but when he makes out from it a syllabus of Roman civil and political history, I cannot assent to this.

In the midst then of such singular diversity of opinion, (which in itself indicates the difficulty of the passage), how is an inquirer to satisfy his own mind? I would say: *From the nature of the case presented, and from analogy.* The nature of the case surely indicates new matter to be disclosed. John *devours* the book, (a phrase which is common among us to designate reading a book with great avidity and interest), and the contents are partly sweet and partly bitter, i. e. what it contains is good news to the people of God, and denunciation and commination to the wicked. Thus furnished with new knowledge he is bidden to continue his prophetic declarations, which are no longer to be confined to the Jewish people, but to have respect *to many nations and kings.* What can be made out from all this, but a further commission to prophesy, and the furnishing

His right foot on the sea, but his left foot on the land, in order to symbolize his control over both. He is about to declare the solemn determination of God to execute, even to consummation, his awful judgments; and a symbolic action declarative of his universal control and power, is altogether appropriate. The passages quoted for illustration by Eichhorn and Heinrichs here, Il. IV. 443. Eneid. IV. 177. Sap. 18: 16. Giddim fol. 68. 2, are altogether inapposite.

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of John with the means of so doing? And then as to *analogy*; if this book be compared with that in 5: 1, we must suppose the object is of a similar nature. How can we believe, I ask again, that it is a mere abridgment of what has been already revealed by the book mentioned in 5: 1, when there is in fact no repetition in the Apocalypse of the same things? Why should we decide against analogy and probability, in order to make out so incongruous a phenomenon? I cannot bring myself to believe, that the writer had a plan no better digested than these suppositions would indicate. I must therefore abide by the views already disclosed, until I can see some better reasons brought forward in support of other and different views.

I do not aver that there are no difficulties in the case. 'Why is this a *βιβλαρίδιον*, and the former one a *βιβλίον*? On the ground which I have taken, are the contents of the second book, so much *less* copious than those of the first, as to require such a distinction in names?' Perhaps one might say, in answer to these questions, that the first *βιβλίον* seems to be a book of *pictures*, i. e. of visible symbolic representations, and therefore a larger size was necessary. The second book contains, like Ezekiel's (2: 10), matter in words, which needs to occupy no great space. Or one might say, that the whole is merely for the sake of *variety*, just as the manner of the visions themselves is varied.

There is still another difficulty. 'Why does not this new commission *follow* the seventh trumpet, instead of *preceding* it?' So indeed it might, if the exhibition of another angel and a new occasion of his appearing, had been within the plan of the writer. But now, the same angel who calls heaven to witness that *time shall be no longer* in respect to the completion of the first great catastrophe, is also charged to furnish the Apocalyptist with a new commission, and to assure him that his duties will not terminate with the full disclosure of the seven-sealed book.

'But why is this book *unsealed*, and the first sealed? Is not the disclosure, in either case, such as can proceed only from him who reveals secret things to men?' It is; but then something is due to a proper regard for variety of representation. Nor is this all. That book, which contains the destiny of God's once beloved people, so long affianced to him, may well be introduced with greater solemnity and more exhibition of mystery, than what concerns the pagan persecutors of the church, whose doom would be less a matter of wonder and astonishment to any who knew their character.

These remarks may perhaps not satisfy the reader. But I must ask of him, before he decides against the views that have been expressed, to investigate the other theories that have been mentioned, and see whether difficulties greater still do not encompass them. These theories appear so incongruous to my own mind, that I cannot give my assent to them. I must believe, that *the writer of the Apocalypse has a continuous and consistent plan throughout his work*; and that there is a harmony among all its parts of such a nature, as to show a uniform progress in the execution of his design.

(3) And he cried with a loud voice, as a lion roareth; and when he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices.

Ὅτε ἔκραξε—what he said, is not here related. It would seem, therefore, to have been a loud note of woe, some interjection uttered which would serve to call attention, and at the same time be indicative of the judgments which were to follow.—*Μυκᾶται* is generally used to designate the *lowing* of the ox; *βρυχᾶσθαι*, for the *roaring* of the lion. Still, in Theoc. XXVI. 20 we find *μύκημα λεαίνης*; so that John does not violate even classical Greek usage in this case. Perhaps the original of this image is to be found in Is. 21: 8, וַיִּקְרָא אַרְיֵה.

Αἱ ἑπτὰ βρονταί, THE *seven thunders*, not simply *seven thunders*. This is to be regarded in a light similar to that of THE *seven angels*, THE *seven spirits*, and many other *sevens* in the Apocalypse. Ewald supposes, that the thunders of the *seven heavens* are meant here. Of the fact that the Jews of the first century were often wont to reckon seven heavens, there can be no good room to doubt; see Ascens. Is. chap. vii. viii, where this is fully exhibited. See also Fabr. Cod. Pseud. V. Test. Test. Levi, c. 2. Tom. I. p. 544, and Eisenmeng. Entd. Judenthum, I. p. 460. But no trace of this is to be found in the Apocalypse, or in the O. or N. Testament. This explanation, then, seems to be improbable. We may well acquiesce, therefore, in the easy and natural exegesis, which makes *the seven thunders* to mean the very loud thunder which is the index of an origin from heaven. It utters something more sublime and awful than common thunder.

(4) And when the seven thunders uttered [their voices], I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying: Seal up that which the seven thunders have uttered, and write it not.

I have included *τὰς φωνὰς ἑαυτῶν*, *their voices*, in brackets, because the genuineness of these words is doubtful. The sense will be the same without them; although the tenor of the style in the Apocalypse would seem to speak in their favour.—*Ἔμελλον γράφειν* denotes that the author was in the act of preparation to write down what was said or uttered; and this shows, by the way, that the supposition made by most of the recent critics, viz. that the apocalyptic visions were *written down at Ephesus* a considerable time after the visions took place, has no good foundation. The intimation here plainly is, that John was employed in writing during the intervals of his visions.

Φωνὴν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, i. e. it was not the command of the angel who had appeared in the vision, but proceeded immediately from God himself.—*Σφράγισον ἃ ἐλάλησαν κ. τ. λ*, i. e. keep secret, close up from the view of men, what the thunders have uttered. That the word is *figuratively* employed here is plain; for John had not yet written down

what was uttered, and therefore could not seal up any instrument or scroll which contained the words now spoken. The meaning of course must be, that *John was not to disclose the words* just uttered, but to keep them secret, as a writing which is sealed is kept secret. Comp. 5: 1, which presents to us a book with seven seals, and of course these seals prevented any one from inspecting its contents; also Rev. 22: 10, where John is directed *not to seal up* the Apocalypse, because its fulfilment was speedily to commence. Dan. 8: 26. 9: 24. 12: 4, quoted by Eichhorn and Heinrichs, are inapposite here, for they have a different sense.*

* But what was it, or could it be, which the seven thunders uttered on this occasion? Vitringa (p. 429 seq:) makes a singular answer to this question. He says that the *seven Crusades* are meant by "the seven thunders; and as to the command to pass in silence what was uttered, he says (of the crusades): "Nec dignae erant quae prolixius exponerentur." I mention this only to remind the reader what extravagances have sometimes been manifested in the interpretation of the Apocalypse, even by some of the most distinguished commentators and divines, when they go into minute historical applications.

In general it seems to be agreed among recent commentators, that, from the nature of the circumstances and the nature of the signal itself, we must draw the conclusion, that what was declared in the voice of thunder, was ominous of the catastrophe near at hand. This is altogether appropriate. On an errand like to that of making such a declaration, the angel himself came; as is clear from vs. 6, 7. And if we examine 11: 15—19 we shall see, that, with the exception of the triumphal song and a disclosure of a few symbols of destruction (v. 19), the writer has himself passed over the catastrophe in silence. Has this no designed connection with the verse before us? Critics in general do not seem to have looked at the subject in this point of view; I cannot but feel, however, that what the thunders here declared, and which John is forbidden to speak of, is there suppressed. This seems better to solve the mystery of comparative silence in chap. 11: 15—19, than all the other reasons that have, with so much discrepancy and variety of opinion, been brought forward.

'But why *keep silence?*' Entire silence, as I apprehend, is neither commanded nor observed; for what does the angel say in vs. 6, 7, and John in 11: 15—19? Yet in neither case is there any circumstantial and direct narration of the final catastrophe. If any one feels this to be a defect in the plan of the writer; or if he concludes from this (as several recent critics have done) that the writer intends to develope no catastrophe here; I would appeal to the reason and nature of the case. Suppose a father called upon to give some account of the death of a prodigal child, who had perished amid the most aggravated crimes; would he be likely to enter into a circumstantial detail of all the horrors and agonies that immediately preceded and accompanied the death of that child? Would he—could he—do anything more than distinctly bring to view the closing scene in general terms, while he suppressed the particulars, as being beyond his powers of description, and because it was altogether inappropriate for him to dwell upon them? Every one must feel the force of such an appeal. And why then can he not allow the same sympathy to have its place in the breast of John, or even a higher and more sacred one, in respect to the beloved people, city, and temple of God? The guilt of that people he has indeed faithfully and fully portrayed; for this was a duty to God and the church. Divine justice must be vindicated. But to

(5, 6) And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land, lifted up his right hand to heaven, and sware by him who liveth forever and ever, who created the heaven and the things which are in it, and the earth and the things which are in it, and the sea and the things which are in it, that delay shall be no longer.

Almost the exact model of this may be found in Dan. 12: 7; with the exception, that there *both* hands are lifted up, here only the *right* hand. However, in Gen. 14: 22. Deut. 32: 40. Ezek. 20: 5, 6, mention is made of only one hand, which almost of course would be the *right* one.—*Εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν*, i. e. toward the place where God dwells. —*Ζῶντι κ. τ. λ.* recounts some of the most striking attributes of the Godhead, such as his eternity, and his supreme creative power; thus increasing the solemnity of the occasion and the oath.—*Heaven, earth, and sea*, is a triplex division of the universe, which is very common in the Scriptures.

Χρόνος οὐκέτι ἔσται, lit. *time shall be no more*, i. e. there shall be no more delay, or no longer respite shall be given, to the persecutors of the church, when the last trumpet shall sound. So the sequel:

(7) But in the days of the sound of the seventh angel, when he shall blow the trumpet, then is the mystery of God completed, as he hath announced to his servants the prophets.

Καὶ ἐτελέσθη, one of those cases where the Praeter is said, by the older grammarians, to be put for the Future. But there is no need of such an enallage. The angel means to say, that immediately on the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the mystery of the seven-sealed book is brought to a close, all is fully completed. Had he used the Future here, it would have left open an indefinite time for completion, contrary to his plain intention. In fact the Greeks, like the Hebrews, employed a Praeterite sometimes to denote future actions which were

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dwell with minuteness on their doom, their fearful end—why may he not be spared the difficult, the almost impossible task? Enough that the consummation is distinctly declared by the angel, 10: 6, 7, and that in 11: 15—19 the triumph of the redeemed is heard, because the church of God is delivered from the hands of its enemies and persecutors. What the seven thunders most probably declared fully to John, he is restrained from writing down, or rather, he is indulged with the privilege of not writing it down, although a sense of duty and fidelity had led at first to prepare for such a task.

The study of the Apocalypse will lead an attentive observer to see and feel, that the proprieties resulting from our sympathies, and the congruities of representation, are very apparent in it, and should not be overlooked in the interpretation of it. Is there not a plain indication here, in respect to suppressing what the seven thunders uttered, that the particulars of the final catastrophe were *not* to be *fully* disclosed? Pity toward the weaknesses of men, and kind regard to the feelings of the apostle, spared him the agonizing task.

regarded as certain. So in Eurip. Medea, 78, *ἀπωλόμεσθ' ἄρ', εἰ κακὸν προσοίσομεν νεὸν παλαιῷ*, i. e. *we have been undone*, in case we shall add a new evil to the old one. Plat. Repub. V. p. 462. See other examples of the like nature in Kühner's Gr. Gramm. § 443. 2, from Homer, Plat. and Demosth.—*Μυστήριον* means the secret designs of God in respect to the enemies of his church, which only the prophets, i. e. inspired men in the Christian church, had been commissioned to make known.*

Εὐηγγέλισε, act. voice, and the only instance of this nature in the N. Testament. Usually this verb has the Midd. form, and governs the Acc. of the thing and Dat. of the person. But often, where the *thing* is omitted, the *person* is put in the Acc.; e. g. Luke 3: 18. Acts 8: 25. 14: 21. 16: 10. Here the construction is like the Hebrew בָּשַׂר אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ, 2 Sam. 18: 19 al. In *translating εὐηγγέλισε τοὺς κ. τ. λ*, we are obliged to make a Dat. after the verb, in conformity with our usual English idiom. In Greek this was unnecessary, although it might have been so expressed.

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* How, in the face of such a declaration as this, De Wette, Schott, Ewald, and Lücke, can still represent the sealed book as *not* brought to a close in chap. xi, and how they can find *no catastrophe* there, I am unable to see, specially when I compare with the sequel such a declaration as we find here. How language can make it stronger or more certain, that the first great scene of the drama *closes* here, it would be difficult to tell. The angel does not even say *τελεσθήσεται*, which might leave a sequel of somewhat indefinite length, but he expresses the absolute and immediate close of the whole in the strongest manner possible, by the Aor. *ἐτελέσθη*. Nor is the nature of the case less explicit than the language. It is evident, that when the seventh and last *seal* was broken, all the heavenly world expected immediate consummation, and looked on in fearful silence, 8: 1. But when the last seal is divided into seven parts (seven trumpets), in order that the long-suffering of God might be exhibited, and time be protracted so that the number of martyrs should be completed, 6: 11, (for in this way a *gradual* accomplishment is provided for); if, I say, after all this the time of the catastrophe is still further protracted, would not the writer have given us some express intimation of it? But of this no notice whatever is given. Exactly the reverse is contained in the passage before us. The second *subordinate* seven (trumpets), growing out of the seventh seal, admit of no *subdivision*. At least, this would be so contrary to the evident nature of the case, and to the usual meaning of *completeness* indicated by *seven*, that nothing but an explicit declaration of the Author himself should satisfy us of any further extension of the contents of the sealed book. Scarcely anything respecting the *plan* of the book seems to me more plain and certain than this; and I find it difficult to imagine how the subject can be viewed in a different light, even after attentively considering what the authors above named have written respecting it. That chap. xi. brings to view an interval, between the appearance of the angel here and the sounding of the seventh trumpet, is indeed sufficiently plain. But what the angel says, in the passage before us, does not interfere at all with this. His declaration is, that when the seventh trumpet shall sound, *there shall be no more delay, ἐτελέσθη μυστήριον.*

(8) And the voice which I had heard from heaven, again spake with me and said: Go, take the little open book in the hand of the angel, who is standing upon the sea and upon the land.

Ἤκουσα, Aor. I. in the Pluperf. sense here as to *time when*, but aoristic as to *continuance*; N. Testament Gramm. § 136. 5. 3.—*Λαλοῦσα . . . λέγουσα*, Part. used as verb in the Praeter, ἦν being implied; as often in this book. Respecting the contents of the little book proffered by the angel; see the remarks on v. 2 above. Almost an exact prototype is in Ezek. 3: 1—3, where the prophet eats the roll presented to him.

(9) And I went to the angel, speaking to him to give me the little book. And he saith to me: Take it and eat it up; and it shall make thy stomach bitter, but in thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey.

It is to be remembered that all is mere supposed and *symbolic* action here, and not a real transaction. Comp. the case of the *girdle* in Jer. 13: 1—7; the case of Ezekiel's lying on one side 390 days, and on the other 40 days, and eating bread baked with dung, Ezek. 4: 4—17; comp. also Hos. i. ii. The same may also be said of many other cases. Surely it is not necessary to suppose anything more in the case before us, than mere symbol. *To devour a book* is figurative language, like *propinare, imbibere, devorare, deglutire*, etc., employed by the Latins in order to designate mental action and eager acquisition by the mind. So Jeremiah also speaks of "*eating* the words of the Lord," 15: 16. In 4 Ezra 14: 38—40, the like idea is conveyed by the image of drinking from a cup of water which was of a fiery colour, and which filled the heart of the seer with pain, but sharpened his memory and increased his wisdom. So here, the contents of the book will be sweet to the taste, but bitter to the stomach of the seer; i. e. what he learns from the book is matter both of joy and grief; *of joy*, because of the good tidings respecting the faithful disciples of Christ; *of grief*, because of the evils which were to come upon many who would persevere in their wickedness. To the same purpose, and comprising the same expressions, is the passage in Ezek. 3: 1—3.

Why then should not our interpretation follow the path here marked out? Is it because we have no *circumstantial* account of the final fall of the metropolis? Investigating by this rule, where shall we find a catastrophe at all in the book? In chap. 16: 17—21, there is very little more of particularity, than in 11: 15—19. Nearly the same circumstances occur in both; and how *consummation* can be plainly found in the first passages, just alluded to, and denied in the second, I do not see. I must therefore interpret the words of the author, by taking a position on a different ground.

(10) And I took the little book from the hand of the angel, and ate it up, and it was in my mouth sweet as honey, and when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter.

Ἔφαγον, is the Aor. II. of an obsolete root, *φάγω*; for the Pres. and several other tenses, *ἐσθίω* or *ἔδω* and their derivates are employed. *Κατέφαγον* and *ἔφαγον* are plainly employed here substantially in the same sense. If there be a difference, it may be expressed perhaps in English by *ate up* or *devoured* and *ate*.

(11) Then he saith to me: Thou must prophesy respecting many people and nations and tongues and kings.

I have referred *πολλοῖς*, at the close of the verse, to all four of the nouns which precede it, because I deem this to have been the intention of the writer. But in the version, our English idiom demands a position of the adjective different from that in the Greek, and I have accordingly given to it the position required.*

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* Ewald, in order to make out his theory respecting the little book, (see on v. 2 above), says, that we must separate v. 11 from vs. 8—10. But no good reason for so doing is apparent to me; nor does the nature of the case, as I apprehend the matter, permit such a divulsion. The conference of the angel with John ends with chap. x. A new scene begins with chap. xi, an episode not unlike to that in chap. vii, before the breaking of the seventh seal, where a consummation was naturally to be expected. There the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads, and thus secured against impending evils. Here, where the last and finishing part of the crisis is near at hand, the temple of God, i. e. the holy place with the essential parts of worship, the residence of the Divinity, is meted out for the like purpose of safety. All that is external and merely ritual is devoted to destruction. The Jewish dispensation, as to its exterior, has now come to its final close, and a new and more purely spiritual religion is to take its place.

How can all this, now, cohere and unite with the vision, in which the angel presents the little book? Even Ewald does not plead for this in his note here; yet in his remarks on chap. 10: 1 (p. 187) he strenuously defends the unity of 10: 1—11: 13. If the reader feels any difficulty about a transition here (in 11: 1 seq.) to another vision, because *καί* simply is employed as the index of it, he needs only to be reminded, that such transitions are common throughout the whole book. He is referred, for a full disclosure of this, to the notes on 5: 1.

As to the *speaker* in the verse before us, he is doubtless the angel who held the little book in his hand. But as to the speaker in 11: 1 (*λέγων*), I take him to be quite a different person from the angel, although his name is not given. But in order to discover who he is, we may ask: Who are MY *two witnesses* in v. 3? Ewald himself being judge (pp. 194, 200), they are the witnesses of *Christ*. It is Christ then who speaks here, and who commissions John to measure off the holy part of the temple for preservation. And if this is true, (and surely it must be either Christ or God), then is there a *new* vision here, and the angel of chap. x. is no longer the special agent in chap. xi. Should the reader feel any difficulty in regard to the introduction of a *new agent* without naming him, the perusal of the book through will satisfy him, that, as in the case of the Hebrew אָמַר, וַיִּקְרָא, etc., the subject of the verb is often left to be supplied by the reader, so in respect

Ἐπὶ λαοῖς κ. τ. λ. our version renders: "*Before* many people, etc." But although *ἐπί* is capable of such a sense, we can hardly suppose the angel to have directed John to write or to utter the Apocalypse *in presence of many people*, etc. Plainly the contents of the book, in the sequel, *have respect to* many people. With this agrees the natural meaning of *ἐπί*, in such a connection as that in which it here stands.

THE TEMPLE: CHAP. XI. 1, 2.

[The first two verses of this chapter have occasioned much trouble to commentators; and the variety of opinion respecting them is so great, that even to give a tolerably full account of it would occupy many pages. I shall briefly state my own apprehensions respecting the passage, and then glance at some of the other interpretations which are entitled to particular notice.

No commentator that I have been able to consult, seems to have made the comparison between the present passage and Rev. vii. Previous to this last passage, as has been noted above, six seals had been mentioned as already opened, and the opening of the seventh and last was now expected. But before this was broken, the servants of God were to be impressed upon their foreheads by his seal, which thus became the emblem of protection and safety in respect to impending evils. Unexpectedly to the spectators, the seventh seal is disparted, so that a *gradual* accomplishment of the woes which it threatens is to take place. (I say *unexpectedly*, because 8: 1 shows that the final catastrophe was expected forthwith). This gradation is marked by the seven trumpets. Six of these have now been sounded; and there remains, at the point of time where we now are, only one to close the scene. And here comes in *another interposition*, viz. that in respect to saving a part of the temple, like to that in chap. vii. with respect to saving Christians from impending evils. Christians, indeed, have already been made secure, in the case now before us. But the close of the Jewish or Mosaic institutions is near at hand. Shall *all* which pertained to these now go to ruin? Or is there not something, that constitutes the *essential unity* of religion under both dispensations, which is worthy of preservation, and which therefore must be preserved? If the ground taken by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is correct, (which we may well believe), then the *basis* of Judaism and Christianity is the same.

Besides; how can we consider the representation before us as anything more than *mere symbol*? Is it to be once imagined, that John actually expected the Gentiles, who would tread down the holy city and the *exterior* part of the temple (*τὴν αὐλὴν τὴν ἔξωθεν*), to spare the interior part of the temple and the worshippers there? This would be to suppose him wholly ignorant of the manner in which war was conducted, at the time when he lived. Moreover, as to matter of *fact*, the reverse of what is implied by such a supposition actually took place. The temple—the very *Sanctum* itself—

to the agent or speaker in the Apocalypse, we are often obliged to resort to the context in order to discover who he is; e. g. Rev. 22: 12 al. The *λέγων* in 11: 1 is sufficiently explained by the *μάρτυσί μου* in v. 3. If these views are correct, we cannot hesitate to connect 10: 11 with 10: 8—10.

was the great slaughter house, at the time of the Roman invasion; and all the sacred building was destroyed together, at one and the same period. Neither fact nor probability, therefore, plead for a *literal* interpretation in this case. And besides this, what shall we say of *measuring the worshippers* (v. 1) in a literal sense, in order that they might be preserved?

For these reasons the whole transaction is to be regarded merely as a symbolical matter. Yet *symbol* must of course signify something; and what is that something in the present case? So far as I can understand the meaning of the symbolic transaction before us, its design seems plainly to be this, viz. to prefigure *the preservation of all which was fundamental and essential in the ancient religion*, notwithstanding the destruction of all that was external, in respect to the temple, the city, and the ancient people of God. It is as much as to say: Amid the ruin of the Jews as a nation, while the holy city is reduced to ashes, and all the sacred ritual of worship forever closed, there are some imperishable things which will survive the work of destruction, and over which the invading hostile nations have no power. Is not the preservation of the *Sanctum* of the temple an appropriate and significant emblem of this?

The greater part of the commentators have passed over this paragraph *sicco pede*, without even seeming to feel that there was any difficulty in the case. A few have given some hints; specimens of which I will now lay before the reader. Zegerus: 'The *temple* means the church; the *altar*, Christ; or the *temple* and *altar* mean Christ, who with his two-fold nature is the temple of God and the altar of the church. *The porch without* means heretics and pseudo-Christians. *To cast them out* is to excommunicate them.' See Crit. Sac. Londinenses on Rev. xi.

Vitringa: 'The interior temple means true Christians; the exterior, false Christians, heretics, etc.; the altar means Christ; measuring the temple and worshippers is scrutinizing the character of Christians real or professed; the casting out of the outer court is excommunicating false professors; the heathen who are to tread down the temple and city, are Christians in name only, (and therefore called *heathen*), who are to form an external church and have dominion over it, suppressing at the same time the true worshippers of God, until at last God shall exclude them from even the external pale of his church.' Comm. in loc.

Heinrichs (in Comm.) thinks that John, like Ezekiel (chap. xl—xlviii.), designed to give a sketch of a literally new temple, more holy and perfect, which would be erected under the new dispensation, in which only the *Sanctum* of the old one would be preserved. Comm. in loc.

Ewald thinks that John designed to represent the most holy and precious part of the temple, as actually to be saved from the ravages of the invading enemy; and that he has said this out of compassion to Jewish prejudices still cleaving to the minds of Hebrew Christians, as well as to those of proper Jews. He says, that the author means to include both pious Jews and Christians among the *worshippers* mentioned in v. 1. Whether John believed that such would be the fact, viz., that the *Sanctum* of the temple would be spared, or whether he only made such a representation in order to conciliate Jewish sympathies, Ewald does not say; but the manner of his representation would seem to indicate the former opinion, viz. that the writer really hoped and expected the *Sanctum* would be spared.

Bleek gives a different and perhaps in some respects more probable

view of the case. He thinks that John supposed the city and temple would be invaded and trodden down for forty-two months by the heathen; but that he expected the sanctuary would be spared, and given up to Christians during that period, because they are "priests unto God," and would have access therefore to the holy places in the temple, where priests only were allowed to come. Thus he makes out a kind of literal and at the same time figurative meaning; with much ingenuity indeed, but still, as I apprehend, in a manner foreign to the true design of the Apocalyptist. Bleek supposes that John had not the least expectation of anything more than a mere *temporary* invasion and subjection of the city; and he represents John as indicating plainly that the city would ultimately be spared.

The interpretations of Zegerus and Vitringa are a striking specimen of the *aliquid ex aliquo* in the exegesis of the Apocalypse; a specimen, however, the like of which may be found in multitudes of writers. The interpretations of Heinrichs, Ewald, and Bleek, all stand on the ground, that the writer of the book before us was not only ignorant of the future, but that he designed nothing more than to express his *hopes*, and give vent to his remaining Jewish sympathies for the literal temple and its ritual. But viewed in their proper light, even these hopes seem to me to be quite destitute of probability. The writer of the Apocalypse, whether inspired or not, well knew the embittered nature of the contest between the Romans and the Jews. As well did he know, also, the vehemence of the Jewish superstitions, and of course that they would be likely, in the natural course of things, to occasion the destruction of the temple and worship which appeared to be the central point of these superstitions, and through them of insurrections among the Jews and opposition to the authority of the Romans. How could he then, with any good ground of hope, expect the temple to be spared? Or how could he suppose that Christians, already the objects of embittered persecution by Nero, would be permitted to retain possession of the Sanctum (according to Ewald and Bleek); or to rebuild another structure there more magnificent than the former one? (according to Heinrichs). In whatever light this matter is viewed, the interpretations before us look improbable, even when contemplated from the position in which these critics would fain place us.

But if John (whether apostle or not) was really what he declares himself to be, i. e. ἐν πνεύματι when he wrote this book or had these visions, then of course do the expositions of the last named writers, and all others that are like them, fall entirely to the ground. *Facts* contradict the declarations of John, in case they are expounded as the writers named bid us to expound them. It comes at last then to the simple question, whether being ἐν πνεύματι affords any security against erroneous and unfounded expectations? These critics would doubtless answer this question at once in the negative; I am as fully persuaded, that an affirmative answer is the proper one.

In a word; why should we, with these interpreters, adopt an exegesis which is half literal and half figurative? Why should we adopt one which on its very face would show that the author of the Apocalypse was merely a prejudiced Jew, and besides this, but a very poor sort of augurer as to the future? Why should we adopt one, which contradicts facts that actually took place? Or why should we so *spiritualize*, with the older writers, as to make out *aliquid ex aliquo*? I may even ask with some emphasis: Why should we do any part of this, when there is an easy and nat-

ural interpretation, in harmony with the whole tenor of the book, which gives a plain and intelligible sense, and one fraught with appropriate meaning?

Eichhorn, previous to the productions of Bleek, Heinrichs, and Ewald, had already set an example of interpretation here, which Lange followed, and which others would have done well to follow; and although his book is not always wanting in exegesis which is improbable and incongruous, yet here he has happily hit upon a proper medium between two extremes. For substance his views are such as I have given above, and which seem to me altogether preferable to those of most succeeding commentators.]

(1) And there was given to me a reed like to a staff, saying: Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship therein.

Κάλαμος is a generic word, and sometimes means, as here, *a light measuring-rod*, sometimes a *staff* for the hand, and sometimes a *pen*. The use of the *κάλαμος* depends on the size. In Ezek. 40: 3, such a reed is called קְנֵה הַמִּדָּה *a reed of measurement;* and the passage there is the model, in some respects, of the one before us.—*Ὅμοιος ῥάβδῳ, like to a staff* or *sceptre*, i. e. like to it in regard to size, and therefore convenient for handling. Or we may construe the clause in another way. In Heb. שֵׁבֶט, which usually means *staff, rod*, also means *measuring rod* or *pole*, Ps. 74: 2. Jer. 10: 16. 51: 19, in these cases = *measured* or *meted portion*. The Sept. in more than twenty-five instances translate this word by *ῥάβδος*; and in like manner do they translate the first two instances just mentioned. We may therefore interpret thus: A reed was given me like to a measuring-rod, i. e. like to it in respect to length, size, etc.

Λέγων—but who is the *speaker?* The vulgate text has supplied the agent, by inserting: *καὶ ὁ ἄγγελος εἱστήκει*. But this clause is justly rejected, as wanting sufficient support from Mss. It is moreover evidently against the tenor of the sequel, for v. 3 (*μάρτυσίν μου*) shows that God or Christ must have been the speaker in this case. The addition in the vulgate text seems to be a gloss introduced from Zech. 3: 5, latter clause. Evidently the *speaker*, in this verse, is the person who gave John the measuring-rod. But as the passive voice (*ἐδόθη*) is here used, the agent in this case is not designated. This must be supplied, therefore, from the context, and v. 3 enables us to supply the proper Nominative. The interpretation which makes *κάλαμος itself the speaker*, is not worth notice, except as a fact which exhibits the possibility of any and every extravagance in interpretation. See further in the remarks at the close of the preceding chapter.

Ἔγειραι, rise, = קוּם or קוּמָה so common in the Psalms. It does not imply merely rising up from a sitting or reclining posture, but *rousing up to action* from a state of inaction; and so it is like the Latin *age, agedum*, etc.—*Μέτρησον . . . τοῦ θεοῦ*, offers no difficulty as to the

simple meaning of the words, but merely as to the design or object of the action. In Ezek. 40: 3 seq., the angel who has the measuring-rod uses it in the way of meting out the proportions of a *new* temple to be erected. In Zech. 2: 1 seq., the angel with a measuring-line employs it for the like purpose in respect to the city of Jerusalem. But in Lam. 2: 8. 2 Kings 21: 13. Is. 34: 11. Amos 7: 8, 9, a *line* and *plumb-line* are employed as symbols of destruction; and these are altogether analogous to the case before us. As a part is to be preserved, and a part to be destroyed, so the former has boundaries assigned to it, beyond which destruction cannot be extended.—*Θυσιαστήριον* means *the altar*, either for burnt offerings or for incense; for the word is employed in respect to both, although it is more appropriate to the former meaning, so far as etymology is concerned. But here doubtless it means *the altar of incense*, which stood near the most holy place.

Καὶ τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας ἐν αὐτῷ, (sc. *ἐν τῷ ναῷ*). But how could the seer *measure* the worshippers with a *κάλαμος*? He could not, in a *literal* sense. I understand the passage, therefore, as exhibiting a *zeugma*, i. e. a verb is connected with two nouns, while it has a sense appropriate only to one. So in Luke 1: 64, *ἀνεῴχθη τὸ στόμα . . . καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα*; 1 Cor. 3: 2, *γάλα ὑμᾶς ἐπότισα, οὐ βρῶμα*. Comp. 1 Tim. 4: 3, and Homer's *οἶνον καὶ σῖτον ἔδοντες*, Gramm. § 192. In the present case we have only to supply some appropriate verb to be connected with *προσκυνοῦντας*, such as *λόγισαι*, *take an account of*; or we may simply transfer the *generic* sense of *μέτρησον* so as to be connected with this noun, and the meaning will be good, viz., *mete out*, *apportion off*, quasi—'draw a line of circumvallation around the inner temple and the worshippers in spirit and in truth who are there; for such shall be protected amid the general ruin.'—That *ἐν αὐτῷ* means *in the temple*, seems sufficiently plain from the nature of the case. Agreement of a pronoun with a more remote antecedent, is by no means an unusual phenomenon in the sacred writings; Gramm. § 124. 4. Note. 3.

(2) But the porch without the temple cast out, and measure it not, for it is given up to the Gentiles; and they shall tread the holy city under foot forty and two months.

Τὴν αὐλὴν τὴν ἔξωθεν. That the temple was divided in the manner here indicated, is plain from Ezek. 40: 17, 19, where we have הֶחָצֵר הַפְּנִימִי and הֶחָצֵר הַחִיצוֹנִי, i. e. *the inner court* and *the outer court*. The Sanctum Sanctorum, and the *ναός* or apartment for incense and sacrifices, constituted the *inner* court, which only the priests could frequent; the remaining or front part of the building constituted another court, where worshippers of the common order assembled; and still farther out was the *court of the Gentiles*, i. e. a space where foreigners might

worship. In the present case, the worshippers in the inner court are of course *priests;* and Christians, it should be remembered here, are *kings and priests* to God, and to them the inmost recesses of the temple of God are opened; comp. Rev. 11: 19, also Heb. 9: 8 and 10: 19, 20. Matt. 27: 51.

Ἔκβαλε ἔξω is to be taken in a qualified or secondary sense here, (for the literal meaning would make no good sense), i. e. it means here to *reject, despise, neglect;* comp. Luke 6: 22. *Καὶ μὴ αὐτὴν μετρήσῃς* explains the meaning of the preceding clause. As he did not include the exterior court in his measurement for preservation, so he gave it up of course to destruction.

Τοῖς ἔθνεσι, to the heathen or *Gentiles.* That the Romans are meant in this case, seems to be very obvious, if we suppose the Apocalypse to have been written during the latter part of Nero's reign, when the Jewish troubles had actually begun. The meaning plainly is, that by the decree of Heaven the exterior temple was to be given up to the Gentiles.—*Πόλιν ἁγίαν, holy city,* a familiar name of Jerusalem, comp. Neh. 11: 1, 18. Is. 48: 2. Matt. 4: 5. 27: 53; a name which it still preserves. This seems plainly to identify the special object which is to be destroyed; and from the impending ruin, the true spiritual worship and worshippers of God are to be preserved.

Πατήσουσι, shall tread down, trample upon, which of course implies thorough subjection and treating with great indignity. Ewald construes it as designating only *profanation* by the presence of the heathen. But surely *Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἔσται πατουμένη ὑπὸ ἐθνῶν,* in Luke 21: 24, in connection with the context, means something more than *profaning.* Indeed, how can we compare the expression here with that in Luke, without being necessitated to suppose, that the object of both passages is precisely the same? And if so, nothing can be more certain, than that the *destruction* of the city and temple of Jerusalem is threatened, and not merely profanation by the presence of heathen.

Forty and two months. Is this period to be regarded as *literal,* or as merely a figurative mode of designating a short period, by a reference to a well known period of time in the book of Daniel, 7: 25. 12: 7? The same question occurs in regard to the next verse, and some other passages in the sequel. After all the investigation which I have been able to make, I feel compelled to believe that the writer refers to a literal and definite period, although not so exact that a single day, or even a few days, of variation from it would interfere with the object he has in view. It is certain that the invasion of the Romans lasted just about the length of the period named, until Jerusalem was taken. And although the city itself was not besieged so long, yet the metropolis, in this case, as in innumerable others in both Testaments, appears to stand for the

country of Judea. During the invasion of Judea by the Romans, the faithful testimony of the persecuted witnesses for Christianity is continued, while at last they are slain. The patience of God in deferring so long the destruction of the persecutors, is displayed by this; and especially his mercy in continuing to warn and reprove them. This is a natural, simple, and easy method of interpretation, to say the least, and one which, although it is not difficult to raise objections against it, I feel constrained to adopt.

In order to save repetition I must refer the reader, for the discussion of the whole subject in relation to *times* designated by the Apocalypse, to Excursus V. at the end of this volume; and for a more ample discussion, to my little work entitled *Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy.*

(3) And I will give to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sack-cloth.

But who are these *two witnesses?* A question that has been the occasion, perhaps, of more conjecture and more unlimited speculation than almost any other which the Apocalypse has originated. Some notice of the efforts which interpreters have made to answer it, seems to be necessary in a case like the present; and particularly so, inasmuch as the subject is not without real difficulties even when viewed in its most simple light. If this notice should answer no other purpose than a warning against groundless and boundless conjecture, and a caution against admitting anything which will destroy the connection and congruity of the author's representations, yet this of itself would be a sufficient apology for introducing it.

Inquiry respecting the Two Witnesses.

In pursuing the object of this Inquiry, I shall first introduce in the briefest manner possible, those opinions respecting the two witnesses which are plainly nothing but mere *conjectures*, and therefore not entitled to any serious examination. I shall then subjoin some other views to which particular importance has been recently attached, and which therefore need some discussion.

I. Conjectures in respect to the Two Witnesses.

(*a*) They are the O. and N. Testament; so Melchior, Affelman, and recently Croly. (*b*) They mean *all* preachers instructed by the Law and the Gospel; so Pannonius and Thomas Aquinas. (*c*) Christ and John the Baptist; Ubertinus. (*d*) Pope Sylvester and Mena, who wrote against the Eutychians; Lyranus and Ederus. (*e*) Francis and Dominic, the respective heads of two orders of monks; quoted in Cornelius a Lapide. (*f*) The great *wisdom* and *sanctity* of the primitive preachers; Alcassar. (*g*) John Huss and Luther; so Horzoff. Others; John Huss and Jerome of Prague. (*h*) The Waldenses and Albigenses; and the Apocalyptist names *two*, be-

cause of the Law and the Gospel, and also with respect to such *pairs* in sacred history as Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha, Joshua and Zerubbabel; he had also his eye upon John Huss and Jerome of Prague; Vitringa. Andrew Fuller also supposes the two witnesses are the Waldenses and Albigenses; Lect. on Apoc. in loc. (*i*) The Jewish and Gentile Christians in Aelia, (the new name of the city built on the ruins of Jerusalem by Adrian), who preached to Jews and Gentiles the necessity of reformation; Grotius, and after him Hammond.

This syllabus comprises only a part of the interpretations given to the verse before us. The intelligent reader, who is in any tolerable measure acquainted with the criticism of the present day, needs no formal refutation of such interpretations. Almost all are wholly inappropriate, in that they have respect not to the period of the invasion of Palestine by the Romans, but to one a long time afterwards. One of them (*c*) even falls upon a period antecedent to the death of Christ. The whole of them, with some slight exception in the cases (*b*) and (*f*), are entirely incongruous and irrelevant.

II. Other views which have a better claim to be examined.

(1) The two witnesses are the two high-priests, *Ananus* and *Jesus;* who nobly withstood the Zealots in Jerusalem, and were massacred by them, Jos. Bell. Jud. IV. 3. 13—6. 1. So Herder and Eichhorn; and after the latter, his humble imitator, F. A. L. Matthaei, and others.

The reason for rejecting this opinion, which was made current for a time through the eloquence and ability of Herder and Eichhorn, are brief, and in my apprehension entirely conclusive. (*a*) These two high-priests were *zealous Jews* and the *enemies of Christianity.* How then could the Saviour say of them: MY *witnesses?* v. 3. And how could he be called THEIR *Lord?* v. 8. If what Bleek (Zeitschrift von Schleiermacher, etc., Heft II. p. 269), Hänlein (Theol. Journal von H. and Ammon, III. p. 380), and Lange (Comm. in Apoc. 11: 10, 11) say, were true, viz. that Ananus was an active persecutor of Christians, and occasioned the death of James the Lord's brother, then the case would be more glaring still, and all attempts to reconcile their character with the description in Rev. 11: 3—13 must be vain. But in respect to this particular point, these writers seem to have erred. There was indeed an Ananus, a high-priest, who occasioned the death of James; but he was slain by the Sicarii in A. D. 66; Jos. Antiq. XX. 9. 1 and Bell. Jud. II. 17. 9. But the Ananus and Jesus who withstood the Sicarii, and were massacred by them and the Idumaeans, were other and different persons, and were assassinated in A. D. 67; Jos. Bell. Jud. IV. 3. 13—5. 2. Still, that Ananus and Jesus were zealous Jews, and opposed to Christianity, no one can doubt who reads their history. (*b*) How can these two high-priests be said to prophesy during the 1260 days of the invasion, when in fact they were destroyed during the very first year of it, viz. during A. D. 67? (*c*) What mean their *resurrection* and *ascension* to heaven? (*d*) In what sense could the Apocalyptist say, that these two high-priests possessed *miraculous* powers, like those of Moses and Elijah? vs. 5, 6. (*e*) The spontaneous impression of every reader is, that the two witnesses, whoever they might be, were the *friends* of Christ and the Christian cause, and that they were endowed with the miraculous powers

of the primitive teachers of Christianity; but how can these predicates belong to the decided *enemies* of Christ—the persecuting Jews of that time? And how can we assign to them a triumph in their resurrection and ascension, which is denied even to the early martyrs? Comp. 5: 9—11. Finally; in reflecting upon this exegesis once quite popular, we cannot help the feeling of surprise, that it could ever have been brought forward and patronized by such men as Herder and Eichhorn. Its day, I trust, has past; but have succeeding times offered us something better in its stead?

(2) Recent commentators of distinguished note in Germany have revived in part the ancient exegesis of Rev. 11: 3—13, which maintained that *Moses* and *Elijah*, or *Enoch* and *Elijah*, are the two witnesses spoken of in the passage before us.

So Bleek (in loc. cit. supra), and so Ewald in his recent Commentary. The ground of this interpretation is, that the Jews of ancient times, and also the early Christians, expected that Christ would make his appearance to vindicate the rights of his kingdom, preceded by the prophets above named, or at least by two of them. Elijah was considered as undoubtedly one of the two, because Mal. 4: 5 was regarded as having expressly named him; and in respect to the other, there was a division of opinion, the Jews in general believing the other prophet to be Moses, while some of them held to Enoch. The position of Bleek and Ewald of course is, that the writer of the Apocalypse partook of these alleged ancient views; that he expected that Christ would speedily come in person to destroy or subdue all his enemies, and would then commence his new and glorious terrestrial reign; and also that his *heralds* would be Elijah and some other distinguished ancient prophet. These heralds would indeed be slain by opposing enemies; but they would be raised triumphantly from the dead, and then the victories of the Messiah would become conspicuous and universal.

Of course, all apprehension that the writer of the Apocalypse was inspired, or had any correct knowledge of the future, is abandoned by such a position; and indeed nothing is more manifest, than that both Bleek and Ewald, (and others also who agree with their views), do not hesitate at all to believe, and do virtually maintain, that John was in no important respect any more enlightened as to the *future*, than other Jewish Christians of the times in which he lived.

To contest the point of John's *inspiration* with those who adopt such an exegesis, would be a task inappropriate to a book of Commentary. But I may be permitted, I would hope, to suggest some doubts in respect to the propriety of the interpretation before us, on grounds simply of a historical and critical nature.

Heinrichs (on Rev. 11: 3) says: "That Moses and Elijah would return from heaven to earth, and be the precursors of the Messiah, *constans erat Judaeorum opinio*." To this opinion Bleek (p. 270 ut sup.) plainly inclines; while Ewald seems undecided whether Moses and Elijah, or Enoch and Elijah, were the specific witnesses in question.

But what is the *proof* of this *constans opinio*? In Mal. 4: 5 it is said, that 'Elijah the prophet will come, before the great day of the Lord.' That the Jews of ancient times gave a literal interpretation to this passage, seems to be quite clear from Matt. 17: 10—12. Mark 9: 11—13, "Why say the scribes that Elijah must first come?" But equally clear is it, also, from these pas-

sages and from Matt. 11: 14, that the Saviour *explicitly* declares John the Baptist to have been the Elijah meant by the prophet Malachi. Comp. Luke 1: 17, which gives the ground of this interpretation, viz. 'he (John) had the spirit and energy of Elijah.'

How, now, I may be permitted to ask, after declarations so explicit as these, can we be persuaded, that the primitive Christians still continued to believe in another and a *literal* coming of Elijah? That John the apostle was familiar with the views of Christians, will not, I trust, be questioned. What ground then is there, to induce us to believe that John expected a literal coming of Elijah? And what is there in the Scriptures, which is a good ground for supposing that *another* prophet was then expected to come with him? Perhaps it may be said here, that John 1: 21 furnishes some ground for supposing that such an opinion was current among the Scribes and Pharisees. But still, if ὁ προφήτης in that passage should be so construed, this exposition would not seem to be favoured by most of the early Jewish testimony.

Pesiqta Rab. fol. 62. col. 1, speaks of only Elijah. Jalkuth Shimoni, fol. 53. col. 3, gives the same view: "Elijah will come three days before the Messiah;" quoted in Eisenmeng. Entdeckt. Jud. II. p. 696. So the Talmud, Tract. Shabbath, fol. 118. col. 1; Rabbi Bechai, Shulchan Arba, fol. 5. col. 4; Jalkuth Shimoni in Mal. fol. 88. col. 4; each and all repeat the same sentiment, Eisenm. ut supra p. 712. Emek Hammelekh repeatedly declares the same thing; quoted in Eisenm. II. 714, 715. Nothing is said in all these of any more precursors than Elijah, or of any other one but he.

But there is still more ancient evidence than any of this. In Sirach 48: 1—9, is a eulogy of Elijah; after which the writer says, that 'he will appear to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' etc. [as in Mal. 4: 5, 6], and then adds: "Blessed are those who shall see him," viz. at the time of the Messiah; vs. 10, 11.

All these opinions are plainly founded on a literal interpretation of Mal. 4: 5, and probably have respect to Christ's *first* coming. In accordance with these, but as referring to Christ's *second* coming, we find the opinions of Jerome on Matt. 17: 12. Aug. De Civ. Dei, XX. 29. Theodoret, Epit. div. Decret. c. 23, quoted in Suicer Thes. I. p. 393. Justin, Dial. cum Tryph. p. 226. Lactantius, Instt. Lib. VII. All of these Christian fathers appear to believe in the reappearance of Elijah, before Christ's *second* coming to destroy Antichrist.

We have here then, as yet, but *one witness* named; and all that is said respecting him, is evidently founded on the literal sense of Mal. 4: 5. The difference of opinion, in the cases above cited, respects not the *number* of the witnesses, nor yet the *person* who will appear, viz. Elijah, but only the point whether the *first* or *second* coming is the one to which Malachi refers.

Thus far, then, all seems to make nothing for the ground assumed by Bleek, Heinrichs, and Ewald. Still they have some apparent ground to build upon. Debarim Rabba, § 3. fol. 255. 2, and Tanchuma, fol. 42. 1, speak of MOSES AND ELIJAH as forerunners of the Messiah; quoted in Schoettgen, Hor. Heb. in Matt. 17: 3, also in Vol. II. de Messia, p. 544. So Targ. Hierosol. in Ex. x—xii, quoted in Eisenmeng. Entd. Jud. II. p. 698. Hilarius Pictaviensis (on Matt. 17: 3) expresses the same opinion; quoted in Corrodi, Geschichte des Chiliasmus, II. p. 438. But this is a small foundation to build upon, in order to support the opinion in question; and even

if it prove anything, it is far enough from proving that this opinion was extant in the time of John.

I may remark here, that so far as the text in the Apocalypse is concerned, there is a palpable allusion to the miraculous powers of *Moses* and *Elijah*, in Rev. 11: 6. That John had his mind upon these prophets, is a point altogether clear. But whether he merely borrows his drapery from that source, or whether he believed and designed to teach their veritable reappearance as precursors of the Messiah, are questions not at all decided by an allusion to them. Those who believe in John's inspiration, or even in his correct views of religious truth, will not be easily persuaded to believe, that he has taught the actual reappearance of the ancient prophets. There is nothing in the text, at least as I read and understand it, which should induce them to believe this.

Somewhat more support in some respects has the opinion, that ENOCH and ELIJAH were to be the *precursors* of the Messiah. I find no satisfactory evidence of this, indeed, in *Jewish* productions; but the Christian fathers show, in their writings, that such an opinion was early and somewhat widely spread among the Christian churches, in respect to the *second* coming of Christ, i. e. his coming to destroy Antichrist. Antichrist they found in the beast, who was to come from the bottomless pit and slay the two witnesses, as described in Rev. 11: 7. The ground of their reasoning was, that Enoch and Elijah, having been translated without tasting of death, would return at the second coming of Christ, and be slain by Antichrist; and so, at last, they would undergo the common lot of all men. The reason for coupling these two prophets together, seems to have been the similarity of their history, and especially the similarity of their exit from the world.

The reader may find the subject so represented in Evang. Nicodemi, Fabr. Cod. Apoc. N. Test., p. 291. So in Tertullian, de Anima, § 50; Andreas, Comm. in Apoc. 11: 3, where he expressly says; "By the two witnesses most of our teachers have understood *Enoch* and *Elijah*," etc. To the same purpose Arethas testifies, in his Comm. on Rev. 11: 3. He even asserts the opinion to be a *concorditer affirmatur*. So, in respect to the particular prophets who were to appear, Damascenus, Orth. Fid. IV. c. 29, in Suicer's Thes. I. p. 392. Hippolytus, de Antichristo, § 43. p. 20, ed. Fabricii. Dorotheus Tyrius, in Biblioth. Max. Patrum, III. p. 426. Ambrosius, in Apoc. 11: 3. Ephrem, in Paraen. de Antichristo. The appeal sometimes made to Iren. Cont. Haeres. IV. 16. V. 5. edit. Massuet, is not at all decisive.

In respect now to all this testimony from the fathers, it may be truly said, that it does not reach the demands of the case before us. Nothing is more evident, than that the views of these fathers grew out of early speculations among Christians respecting Antichrist and the Millennium, connected with difficulties concerning the place to which Elijah and Enoch had been transported. These prophets, according to the views of that time, had not been in *Hades* at all; and so the ancient fathers thought that they could not be raised from the *dead*; they must therefore, as it seemed to them, return to life and undergo a real death; after which, they might be introduced into the heaven of the redeemed. So, as we may concede, thought and reasoned some of the Christian fathers; but among the *Jews*, we find no evidence in regard to such an opinion. We have no evidence that it existed at all in the days of John; unless indeed some one may al-

lege, that the passage in Evang. Nicodemi (quoted above) renders it in a measure probable. Yet we cannot attribute much weight to this production, because of its fabulous nature and late origin.

That the Christian *fathers*, even, were far from being as united in opinion as Andreas and Arethas intimate, is evident enough, not only from what has been already quoted and referred to, but also from the fact, that ENOCH, ELIJAH, and JOHN the Evangelist, are united by some, as the *precursors* of the Messiah at his second coming. Thus Methodius, as quoted in Suicer Thes. I. p. 393. So too Hippolytus (nothus), in App. ad Opp. Hippol. p. 14. § 21. edit. Fabr. Also Ephraem of Antioch (fl. 526), cited in Photius' Bib. Cod. 225, and quoted in Corrodi, Gesch. Chil. II. p. 439. Barradius (quoted in Cal. Bib. Illust. in Apoc. 11: 3, p. 1821) refers to Theophylact, Arethas, Hippolytus, Damascenus, and others, as maintaining this opinion. If so, some of them must have had very different views at different times; for the quotations made above of opinions entertained by some of them, would seem to prove something quite different from this.

As a still further variation of opinion, may be mentioned the views of Victorinus Pictavionensis, the earliest commentator we have on the Apocalypse. This writer (in Apoc. 11: 3, Bib. Max. Patrum. III. p. 418), says: 'Many suppose that *Elijah* and *Elisha*, or *Elijah* and *Moses*, are the two witnesses; but JEREMIAH is to be joined with *Elijah*, because no mention is made in Scripture of his death, and because it was predicted that "he must be a prophet to many nations," and in order that he should fulfil this prediction (which was not done during his former life), he must rise from the dead, be a precursor of the Messiah, and preach to many nations; even as John says, Rev. 11: 3—13.'

With facts such as these before us, now, we may well ask: Where is the *constans Judaeorum opinio*, about Moses and Elijah, or Enoch and Elijah? Or where is to be found any unity or consistency even among the Christian fathers themselves? We have, (1) Elijah. (2) Moses and Elijah. (3) Enoch and Elijah. (4) Enoch, Elijah, and John the Evangelist (see John 21: 22). (5) Elijah and Jeremiah. The first is an old opinion, founded on a *literal* interpretation of Mal. 4: 5, (which was expressly corrected by Jesus himself, Matt. 11: 14); the second is an opinion supported by a few Rabbinic writers, who for the most part lived centuries after the time of our author; for the third, no Jewish authors, and no early Christian ones bear witness; for the fourth and fifth, there is not testimony enough even to render them worthy of being canvassed. Where then, we may ask again, is the *vetus*, and where the *constans* opinio Judaeorum?

Setting aside now, for the moment, the question of John's inspiration, and supposing (what Ewald, Lücke, Schott and others assert) that the author of the Apocalypse was not John the apostle, but some disciple or friend of John at Ephesus, is there any considerable probability, that the representation of the two witnesses in Rev. 11: 3—13 is founded on the fable, that Moses and Elijah, or Enoch and Elijah, were to be precursors of the Messiah, at his second coming in order to destroy Antichrist? I am willing that this question should be decided by impartial critics, even on the ground now taken, if they choose it. After the Saviour himself had dissipated the illusion about the *literal* coming of Elijah (Matt. 11: 14), I cannot well see how John the apostle, or any such friend of his as could write the Apocalypse, could indulge the *reverie* which Bleek, Ewald,

many of the ancient fathers, and specially the Romish doctors of later ages, ascribe to him. Bellarmine, the great Romish champion, even goes so far, indeed, as to ascribe *heresy* to any one, who denies the patristical opinion in respect to this subject. By this he means, the opinion that Enoch and Elijah will *literally* come, and be put to death by Antichrist. But Bellarmine makes too much haste, in this case, even for *tradition* itself.

We have seen that nothing is actually more wavering and discrepant than the patristical opinions in relation to this matter. The very nature of the case also shows, that such opinions can have no good foundation. Equally destitute of any valid support, too, is the opinion that Antichrist is found in Rev. 11: 7; unless, indeed, a most *generic* meaning be given to this appellation. We are remitted, therefore, after all our wanderings into these by-paths—after our pursuit of mere conjectures and guesses, our examination of the claims made for Jewish high priests and for prophets expected to rise from the dead—to a further effort in order to elicit from the text and context some consistent meaning, which will comport with the idea, that the writer of the Apocalypse was neither an idle dreamer, nor an enthusiastic visionary. It may be shown to be probable, that the author was not regardless either of congruity in the plan of his work, or of real and apposite meaning in the imagery which he introduces.

What then is *apposite?* And what does the nature of the case admit or require?

In Rev. 6: 11 the martyrs supplicating for retribution upon the enemies and persecutors of the church are told, that *they must wait for a while, until the number of martyrs becomes augmented, and the iniquity of their persecutors comes to its full completion.* Against the judgments of heaven which are to overtake the latter, Christians in general are secured by the seal of God impressed upon their foreheads, ch. vii. Here, in ch. xi. which brings us to the close of the first catastrophe, we have a picture of the renewed and bitter efforts of the enemies of the church to destroy it, even at the period when destruction was impending over themselves. In this way the reader is prepared to acquiesce in the doom which awaits them, on the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet.

Nor is this all. The long suffering of God is thus displayed towards his once beloved people. They are exhorted to repentance while destruction is impending, in order that they may escape. Prophets furnished with miraculous powers, like those of Moses and Elijah, so as to give full proof of their divine mission, are sent to them. But they will not hear. When the time fixed by heaven for their probation is past, those prophets are given up to the persecuting fury of their enemies, and they fall a sacrifice. Yet the cause which they advocated is not rendered hopeless by this. It is not even weakened; for the martyrs are raised from the dead, and ascend in triumph to heaven. In other words: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church;" for the church becomes victorious by the deadly assaults made upon it. The enemies of religion may indeed bring upon themselves swift destruction, by their malignity; they do so; but the church will rise and triumph, and enjoy continued divine protection and favour, amid all the trials to which it can be subjected.

That *literally* two, and only two, witnesses were to appear in these times of peculiar wickedness; that they were to be *literally* raised from the dead, and to ascend to heaven, etc.; we need not strive to disprove, in comment-

ing on such a book as the Apocalypse. In all cases great allowance is of course to be made for symbol and costume. Still, it is also a matter of course that there should be some *facts* at the basis; and here these facts are, that God would raise up faithful and well endowed preachers among the Jews, at the period when the nation were ready to perish; that those preachers would be persecuted and destroyed; and after all, that the Christian cause would still be triumphant. If we go beyond this in literal interpretation, we are at once merged into abysses from which there is no escape; for how could all "the inhabitants of the earth" literally obtain the news of the death of the witnesses in three and a half days, and send presents to each other, and come to Jerusalem and exult over their dead bodies, within the same period of time? vs. 9, 10. But enough—for it is impossible to make out a literal exegesis on any ground whatever, except that of absolute absurdity.

One question remains, on the ground now assumed. Why *two* witnesses? Because, in the first place, two are a competent number to establish any matter; see Deut. 17: 6. 19: 15. Num. 35: 30. John 5: 30—33. Matt. 18: 16. But I would not say, that this is all which need be supposed in the present case; for the mission of the seventy disciples in pairs, Luke 10: 1; the appearance of conspicuous prophets and personages for the management of the Jewish political and ecclesiastical affairs and for their reformation, (such for example as Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha, Zerubbabel and Joshua), seems plainly to point to a basis on which we can build in part the explanation of the number *two* in this case. The meaning is, that a *competent* number of divinely commissioned and faithful Christian witnesses, endowed with miraculous powers, should bear testimony against the corrupt Jews, during the last days of their Commonwealth, respecting their sins; that they should proclaim the truths of the Gospel; and that the Jews, by destroying them, would bring upon themselves an aggravated and an awful doom. All beyond this is mere *costume* or *symbol*; and this, employed in like manner as we find symbols employed in every other part of the Apocalypse.

But an earnest inquirer may perhaps be disposed to go still further in his inquiries, and ask: 'How much of all that is now supposed to be predicted here, *actually* happened during the invasion of Judea by the Romans?'

This question, however, we have not the adequate means of fully answering simply by historical documents. Josephus is not the historian of *Christians*. He touches indeed, in a short paragraph, upon John the Baptist, on James the brother of Jesus, and perhaps upon the history of Jesus himself; but he was too much involved in Jewish prejudices and civil concerns, to inquire after matters of Christian history. Tacitus of course gives us nothing but political and civil history. He is brief, full of fiction and prejudice in respect to the opinions of the Jews, but graphic as to some events of the Jewish war. The N. Testament history of the church does not cover the ground under examination. Early ecclesiastical histories, such as that of Hegesippus and others, have perished. But still, we have an authority of the most decisive nature remaining. It is the Saviour himself, who, in his prophecy respecting the destruction of Jerusalem, has plainly foretold the persecution of Christians, at the period in question; see Matt. 24: 9—13. Mark 13: 9—13. Luke 21: 12—16. Perfectly reconcilable with the fulfilment of this prediction we may suppose it to be,

that, according to the testimony of the ancients, the great body of Christians fled beyond the Jordan to Pella, when Palestine was invaded by the Romans. That Judea could successfully resist the Roman power, no considerate person would believe. Hence the flight of Christians, in accordance with the warnings of the Saviour. But still, the case can hardly be imagined, where *all* would be able to make good their escape. The sick, the aged, paupers, persons of a hesitating or doubting turn of mind, must, or at least would, delay, or give up an effort to fly. Then, among the faithful and zealous teachers of Christianity in Palestine, there must have been those who chose to remain, and preach repentance and faith to their perishing countrymen. These I regard as being symbolized by the *two witnesses* in 11: 3. That they are endowed with *miraculous* powers, is surely no matter of just offence to the Christian critic, considering the period in which they lived. It is by the presentation of their lofty character and endowments, and their subsequent martyrdom, that the Apocalyptist has so exceedingly heightened the picture of Jewish guilt. One cannot find it in his heart to deny, that the time for sounding the last woe-trumpet had at length fully come.

At all events, it is clear that the Zealots and other Jews did not lose their disposition to persecute at this period. And well may we suppose that Christians, when they urged the declarations of the Saviour as to the impending fate of Jerusalem, would be taken off by the Zealots, on grounds of political jealousy, if not on other grounds; for all who manifested a sense of approaching danger, or made an effort to restore peace, were destroyed by the Zealots. But to destroy the Christian religion, or even to arrest its final triumphs, was not in the power of the Jews or of the Romans. Truth achieved its victories then; it was destined to achieve still greater triumphs.

Wetstein, who has not unfrequently been represented as of the same opinion in respect to the two witnesses as Herder and Eichhorn (see p. 220 above), has in fact given a very different view. He says (p. 890 of Vol. II.), that the two witnesses "were prophets in the church, predicting the destruction of the temple and the Jewish commonwealth." Daubuz (Comm. on Apoc.), and Lowman (on the Rev.), express an opinion substantially of the same tenor with that which I have endeavored to defend, although they enter into little or no discussion respecting the merits of the case. Zegerus seems to have had some views of the like nature.

The verbal criticism of the passage before us may now be resumed. Δώσω needs a direct complement. *What* is to be given? The answer might be προφητείαν, i. e. *the gift of prophecy*, or *the power of prophesying*, as this word means in 1 Cor. 12: 10. 13: 2, 8. 14: 22; for such a supplement might be naturally implied, in accordance with the clause that follows. Or we may solve the form of expression here (viz. the Fut. immediately after δώσω) by the Hebrew idiom, which not unfrequently connects a verb with נָתַן, when the latter makes that verb a part of its complement; e. g. Ezek. 37: 26, וְנָתַתִּים וְהִרְבֵּיתִי, comp. Jer. 9: 1. Ps. 55: 6, which however have only an indirect bearing on

this case. So after δώσω and ποιεῖ, the particle ἵνα with a Subj. verb is employed in the like way as the Fut. here; comp. Rev. 3: 9. 13: 12, 16.—*Προφητεύσουσιν* is not limited to *predicting*, but often means, in the N. Testament as well as the Old, any and every kind of *preaching* by special divine aid.

Twelve hundred and sixty days. There have not been wanting critics who have interpreted these as having respect to a period either preceding or following the *forty-two months* of the preceding verse. So Lactantius Instt. VII. 17, Andreas (Comm.), Hippolytus (Comm. on Dan. 9: 27, edit. Fabric. p. 272), and others, who place the coming of the witnesses before the coming of *Antichrist* to tread down the holy city. But it is so evident (since both periods named are of the same length) that the writer regards them as *contemporaneous*, that any effort to establish this position would seem to be unnecessary. The meaning therefore is, that during the time in which the Gentiles are engaged in laying waste the holy land and city, the witnesses will perform their duty, and will become martyrs near the close of this period. As to the period itself, see on v. 2 above, and also Exc. V. on the Times designated in the Apocalypse.

Περιβεβλημένοι σάκκους, the usual emblem of mourning and distress; but sometimes a designation of the *prophetic* costume, see Matt. 3: 4. Is. 20: 2. Zech. 13: 4. Probably the meaning here is the latter one. Still, if there be united with this meaning the emblem of a mournful state of the country and nation, the description is the more significant. The participle in this clause, which is in the Nom., accords with the implied Nom. to *προφητεύσουσιν*.

(4) These are the two olive-trees, and the two lamps, which stand before the Lord of the earth.

Does not the writer plainly show here that he had no such intention as literally to designate the prophets Moses and Elijah, or Enoch and Elijah? *These are* (οὗτοί εἰσιν) means, *these correspond to*, or *these are represented by*, the two olive trees and the two lights, etc., i. e. those mentioned in Zech. iv. There the prophet sees a golden lamp with seven branches (vs. 1, 2), and two olive trees standing by it, emptying their oil into it by ducts from the tree to the lamp (vs. 11—13). These the angel-interpreter declares to be symbols of the two anointed ones [Joshua and Zerubbabel], who stand before the Lord of the whole earth (v. 14). In like manner, as to our text; the two witnesses whose office it is to build up the kingdom of Christ and establish it on a firm foundation, may be aptly compared, as Joshua and Zerubbabel the founders of the renewed Jewish Commonwealth were, to the two olive-trees perpetually fresh and vigorous, and the lights which their oil con-

tinually fed. In Zechariah, indeed, we have but *one* lamp with seven branches or lights; but here the author has mentioned *two* lamps only, and not any branches. This variation, however, is of no real moment as to the significancy of the passage; but still it shows the freedom which the author of the Apocalypse used in respect to his sources, never confining himself to an exact repetition or imitation of them. The meaning of the whole seems plainly to be, that as Joshua and Zerubbabel were employed in building up and establishing the ancient temple and church, so, under the new dispensation, faithful leaders and teachers are employed in building up the new and spiritual commonwealth of Christianity. The nature of the comparison here is a good reason, moreover, why the author should designate but *two* witnesses rather than any other number. The two olive trees, and the two Jewish leaders, of course demand a corresponding *two* under the new dispensation.

Αἱ ἐνώπιον . . . ἑστῶτες. So Mill, Knapp, Griesbach, Lachmann, Matthaei, Vater, Tittmann, and Hahn. But Wetstein has *ἑστῶσαι*, and Ewald approves this reading. In favour of *ἑστῶτες* are A. C. and some twenty Codices. Those critics who decide in favour of the genuineness of a reading, because it is internally improbable, or inconsistent with the laws of grammar, will of course be disposed to adopt the anomalous *αἱ . . . ἑστῶτες*, i. e. a fem. article and a masc. participle. But I know of no like instance, in respect to the article, in the Apocalypse, or in the N. Testament; although there are cases where a gender of nouns different from the more usual one is employed, but which still may be *common* gender by popular usage. I do not think the authority adequate, in this case, to sanction so improbable a reading as *αἱ . . . ἑστῶτες*. Yet if it be admitted, it is capable of explanation. In its gender *αἱ* conforms to its antecedents *ἐλαῖαι* and *λυχνίαι*, while the Part. *ἑστῶτες* is a *constructio ad sensum*, because the *witnesses* (masc.) are designated by it. Comp. Xen. Mem. II. 2. 3, *αἱ πόλεις . . . λέγοντες*. Aristid. I. p. 267—*πόλεων, καλούντων τι ὡς αὐτούς*. Many other cases of the like nature, even in the Classics, any good Greek grammar will supply. As to the meaning of the whole clause, it is evidently intended to designate the honourable station of the witnesses, and the office (of which they discharge the duties) as being of divine appointment. In other words; being represented as *standing before the Lord*, they are of course presented to us as the ministers of the divine will, admitted to the special presence, care, and confidence of the Saviour.

(5) And if any one will do them harm, fire issueth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; yea, if any one will do them harm, in like manner he must be destroyed.

Εἴτις . . . θέλει, Text. Recept. *θέλῃ*; both readings have been taxed with being bad Greek, in a hypothetical sentence of the nature here presented, because the Opt. with *εἰ*, it is said, is the usual form for expressions of this nature. But this is the fact only when a case is merely *supposed*, or *conjectured;* on the contrary, when the speaker designs to state a thing which he believes will certainly happen, he uses the Indic. with *εἰ*; see Gramm. § 157. 1, and Winer, § 42. b. 2. *a.*

Πῦρ ἐκπορεύεται κ. τ. λ, i. e. they are furnished with a power of resisting and destroying their enemies, like to that which Elijah possessed, comp. 2 Kings 1: 10—14. Luke 9: 54. But here there is a shade of difference, as usual, in our author. Elijah commanded the fire to descend *from heaven;* the witnesses breathe it from their own mouth. But is this to be understood literally of fire actually breathed out, or tropically of words which like a burning fire would wither and consume? In 4 Ezra 13: 4, 10, 27 (*ut* spiritum et ignem), the same image is employed in a kind of half literal and half figurative manner, so that it is difficult to discern exactly what the meaning of the writer is. In Enoch 61: 4 it is said: "The word of his mouth [of the elect One] shall destroy all the sinners;" probably by rebuke or condemnation. In Rev. 1: 16 a *sword* is said to issue from the mouth of the Saviour, as a symbol of destruction to enemies. The passage before us might be interpreted in reference to severe and indignant rebuke by the two prophets or witnesses; but if we compare Rev. 9: 17, 18, it seems more probable, that the author had before his mind the image of flaming fire breathed forth so as to destroy; comp. Ps. 18: 8 (9). This seems to be rather confirmed by the verb *κατεσθίει*, *wholly consumes* or *destroys*. The Pres. tense here represents the whole scene as passing before the mental vision of the prophet.

This sentiment the author virtually repeats in the sequel of the verse, so as to render it the more intensive. I have rendered *καί* in accordance with this design, in the version.—*Οὕτω*, i. e. in this very manner, viz. with destruction by fire, must every one who harms them be cut off.—*Δεῖ*, *must*, i. e. such is the appointment of heaven, and it will take place.

(6) The same have power to shut up the heaven, that the rain shall not fall during the days of their prophecy; and they have power over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth by every kind of plague, so often as they may desire.

Κλεῖσαι τὸν οὐρανόν refers to the ancient opinion, that the rain was kept in reservoirs above, and descended through apertures in the firmament; Gen. 1: 7. 7: 11. 8: 2. 2 K. 7: 2. *To shut* or *close up the heaven*, is of course to stop or restrain the rain from descending, and thus to

bring on drought or famine; comp. James 5: 17. 1 K. 17: 1. Sirach, 48: 2, 3. In other words: The two witnesses were to be furnished with miraculous powers, like to those of Elijah.

Nor do the miraculous powers of Elijah alone afford full scope for comparison. The two witnesses are even to be endowed as Moses himself was, the great head of the ancient dispensation.—*Ἐξουσίαν ἔχουσιν ἐπι . . . εἰς αἷμα*, i. e. they can smite the streams and turn them into blood, as Moses did the Nile of old, Ex. 7: 17 seq. Comp. Rev. 8: 8 above.—*Στρέφειν αὐτὰ εἰς αἷμα* is an epexegetical clause, inserted in order to explain *ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων*. These two references to Moses and Elijah show plainly, that if a *literal* sense must be given to the passage, they are the persons whom the writer has in mind.

Πατάξαι . . . πληγῇ, to smite is to be tropically understood, and means *to chastise, to punish.*—*Ἐν πάσῃ πληγῇ*, viz. with every kind of plague, even such as Moses inflicted on the Egyptians. And all this—*ὁσάκις ἐὰν θελήσωσι, so often as they may choose.* The *ἐὰν* in this case stands for *ἄν* and merely gives a generic conditionality to the clause; see Rob. Lex. *ἐάν*, No. 4. This particular use of *ἐὰν* for *ἄν*, belongs to the later Greek. As employed here, it requires the Subj. mode after it.

(7) And whenever they shall have finished their testimony, the beast which ascendeth from the bottomless pit will make war with them, and overcome them and slay them.

It is the Saviour who is speaking (see v. 3, *μου*); and in the preceding description of the two witnesses, the *Pres.* tense is employed. The transition here to a future conditional (Aor. Subj.) is of course in its proper place, when an event yet to come is spoken of. So through the verse—*τελέσωσι*, and then the Fut. *ποιήσει . . . νικήσει . . . ἀποκτενεῖ*. This state of things being introduced, the writer then resumes the Pres. tense again in the narration, intermixed with futures, v. 9, 10. Changes of such a nature are frequent in this book, and indeed in all parts of the N. Testament. When the Aor. Subj. (as here *τελέσωσι*) is preceded by *ὅταν* it designates the *Fut. exactum;* and so I have translated it. See Kühner's Gramm. § 807. 2. Comp. Mark 8: 38. John 4: 25.

Τὸ θηρίον . . . ἀβύσσου. But who or what is this *beast?* That the answer to this question was easy, and well known to the readers of John's day, seems to be intimated, of course, by the article *τό* prefixed. But the question has been very variously answered, in later times.* For

* The ancient commentators, Victorinus, Andreas, and Arethas, all declare for *Antichrist*. But who Antichrist is, or will be, they have not told us. Those Christian fathers in general seem to have declared for *Antichrist* here, who believed that Enoch and Elijah, or Moses and Elijah, were to be recalled from the other world, and to precede the coming of Christ in order to destroy Antichrist. In later times, most interpreters have passed by this clause of v. 7 in silence; as

myself, I must conclude, and this for reasons which are given below in the Note, that the meaning of our text is simply this: 'Satan,

is quite too common with respect to the difficult passages of the Apocalypse. Zegerus says, that *θηρίον* is the *devil* or *antichrist*. Grotius and Hammond represent it as meaning the famous impostor *Barchochab*, in the time of Adrian, who persecuted Christians. Eichhorn says, that *θηρίον* is generic, and is put for *θηρία*; and also that *θηρία* means the locusts mentioned in chap. 9: 2 seq. Heinrichs says, that it means the *leader* of the locusts, viz. Apollyon, 9: 11. Lange thinks it means the *dragon;* see Rev. 13: 2 seq.

That Antichrist (in a *generic* sense) is designated by *θηρίον*, is true enough; for plainly the beast is *hostile* to Christians. But as to any specific individuality in this case, unless Satan himself or the dragon be meant, it would be difficult indeed to make out a probability. When John introduces *ὁ δράκων* in 12: 3, 4 seq. 13: 2, 4. 16: 13, 20. 20: 2, he takes it for granted that his readers will know who is meant, either in consequence of the predicates assigned to him, or else in consequence of the appellation as being applied by common usage to Satan, the *old serpent* who beguiled Eve, 2 Cor. 11: 3. So here, *τὸ θηρίον* is said *to ascend from the abyss;* and who is it that dwells in the abyss, and is an enemy to Christians, and can come forth from that place to oppose them? Who but Satan or the Dragon? Ewald says, it means *Nero*, who was looked upon as Antichrist. But the Romish monster or beast, who persecutes the church, comes up from the *sea* (ch. 13: 1), not from the bottomless pit. Ewald, however, in order to avoid the force of this, says that תְּהוֹם often means the *sea*, and is also frequently rendered *ἄβυσσος*, in the Septuagint; and that here the word *ἄβυσσος* may mean the same as *θάλασσα* in Rev. 13: 1, i. e. *Orcus* or שְׁאוֹל is meant in both, and so also in 17: 8. So much indeed is true, viz., that in 17: 8 the *Romish* beast is represented as coming *ἐξ ἀβύσσου*; and such might be the sentiment here, if the reader had been at all prepared to refer *θηρίον* to a *Romish* persecuting power. But no such preparation has been made here; whereas in respect to 17: 8 the preparation is amply made, beginning with 13: 1 and continuing down to 17: 8, so that the reader may easily understand who is meant. But here *τὸ θηρίον ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου* comes upon us unexpectedly; since nothing has yet been said of the Romans as persecutors of Christians. The *beast* who is to slay the witnesses, develops himself and exercises his power in *Jerusalem* or the *holy city*. This is the city which is to be trodden under foot, whose inhabitants are warned by the two witnesses, and who have become enraged by reason of the rebukes of these witnesses. How comes Nero, already making war *against* this city, to be represented as being in the midst of it, and there joining as an *associate* with his bitter enemies the Jews, in slaying the witnesses who had opposed the latter? There is too much of incongruity in such an interpretation. Is it not more easy and natural to suppose that *Satan* is here meant, whose influence on the persecutors in the holy city is just the same as that of the *dragon* (= *θηρίον* here), in chap. 13: 2 seq, upon the heathen persecutors of Christianity? There certainly is no necessity for supposing that *θηρίον* means the same identical monster here as in chap. xiii. xvii, i. e. the *Romish* persecuting power; for neither the origin nor the attributes of the two beasts are the same. Merely because the beast in 11: 7 is said to *ascend from the abyss*, and the [Romish] beast in 17: 8 is represented as coming from the same place, we must not conclude that both beasts are the same, or are symbols of one and the same thing or person. The locusts and Abaddon who leads them on (chap. ix.) both come from the pit; yet surely they are not one and the same. Besides, in Rev. 17: 8, the as-

who comes from the bottomless pit, will stir up the enmity of those who hate and fear the witnesses, and urge them on to persecution and to blood.' It need not be proved, that a *beast* is a familiar symbol for any noxious, powerful, and dangerous enemy.

Νικήσει αὐτούς κ. τ. λ. What is done by Satan's agency, is attributed to him; as is often the case throughout the Scriptures, in similar cases.

But how comes it that these witnesses, furnished as they are with miraculous powers to defend themselves, are overcome by the beast in this case, and finally perish? This question might be partly answered by asking another: How came Paul, and Peter, and other apostles, who were protected and kept in perfect safety for a time, at last to fall before the power of persecution? How came Jesus, who could pray to his Father, and he would send him twelve legions of angels (Matt. 26: 53), still to suffer himself to be apprehended and crucified? Because, I answer, it was known and believed by them, when the time for their death respectively came, that such was the will of God; and therefore

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cent from the pit designates not the *origin* of the beast (see in vs. 3, 7), but only the place from which he rises, after he has been destroyed, (v. 8, *ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι*). For his place of *origin*, see 13: 1. All evil, or instruments of evil, occasioned or controlled by Satan, may be aptly represented in a poetic way as coming from the *abyss*, and they are sometimes so represented. The Saviour even says of the malignant Jews: "Ye are from *beneath*, I am from above;" and in connection with this he says: "Ye are of your father, the devil," John 8: 23, 44. There is then no good reason to say, that, because the beast (Rev. 17: 8) comes, i. e. returns to life, from the abyss, and symbolizes (allowing this interpretation) the *Roman Nero*, therefore the beast in the text before us is the same. The *predicates* of both must be such, that we can with propriety and congruity suppose them to be the same agent, in order to justify such an interpretation. But we have seen that such is *not* the case, in the present instance. And in fact, even if some of the attributes symbolically described were the same in both cases, it would not prove a sameness of the agents; for the beast or dragon in Apoc. 12: 3, with seven heads and ten horns, is an entirely different beast from that in 13: 3, which has the same number of heads and horns. The question rests mainly then, not on the sameness of place from which they both may come, and not even on the sameness of some of the symbolic attributes, but on the fact, whether the same agent in both cases would be the *appropriate* one. Now what I aver is, that the agency of Nero, in the present case and under the present circumstances, would be manifestly incongruous and inappropriate. It is the inhabitants of the city *where our Lord was crucified*, who are enraged against the witnesses; it is they, stimulated by *Satan* (not by Nero), who slay the witnesses, and exult over their dead bodies. I may ask again: How could Nero and his most embittered enemies the Jews, *cooperate*, and this even in Jerusalem, against the witnesses in question? Nero at home did indeed persecute Christians, because he hated them as *Jews*; but as to coöperating in Jerusalem with his most bitter enemies—this appears too incongruous to be supposed. Of course we are forced upon the question: Is there no more probable interpretation than this?

they did not and would not seek for deliverance from death. Or we may even suppose, that the miraculous power which the witnesses once had possessed, ceased when the work appointed for them by Heaven was done, and they were then called to seal their testimony by their own blood. Such must have been the case, in regard to the apostles and others.

(8) And their corpses shall be in the street of the great city, which is spiritually named Sodom and Egypt; where their Lord also was crucified.

Πτῶμα is the reading which recent critics prefer, rather than the vulgate *πτώματα*. It is of little importance, in the present case; for *πτῶμα*, when joined with *αὐτῶν* (as here), must of course be *generically* understood; and accordingly I have rendered it as plural. The older Greek used *πτῶμα* in connection with a Gen., e. g. *πτῶμα ἀνθρώπων*, *πτῶμα οἴκων*, lit. the *ruins* or *wreck* of men, of houses, etc. But later Greek writers employ it as in our text; see Lobeck ad Phryn. p. 375. The mention of the corpses here, as lying unburied in the streets, (for such of course is the implication), is very significant of the contempt and hatred with which the witnesses would be treated; for the Jews, above all people, were specially solicitous to bury their dead, see Gen. 23: 4, and comp. 2 Sam. 21: 9—13. Ecc. 6: 3. Is. 14: 18—20. 22: 16. 53: 9.

Καλεῖται πνευματικῶς κ. τ. λ, i. e. the *literal* name is not given in this discourse, but such an one as describes its condition and character in a spiritual or moral sense. What the character of *Sodom* was, see in Gen. xviii. xix, comp. 2 Pet. 2: 6. What that of Egypt was, in respect to God's chosen people, is fully developed in Ex. i—xv. Isaiah of old had compared Jerusalem to Sodom, 1: 9, 10; and so did Jeremiah, 23: 14, and Ezekiel in 16: 46—49. In Ezek. 23: 8, Israel is also represented as adopting the customs, i. e. vices, of *Egypt*. Peculiarly appropriate are these names here; for Sodom persecuted righteous Lot, and Egypt oppressed the Israelites; and the Lord displayed his righteous judgments against both, as he was now about to do in respect to Jerusalem. In describing Jerusalem then *πνευματικῶς*, i. e. as to its moral or religious character, the significant names above mentioned are employed with graphic effect. But lest there should be any doubt left in the reader's mind, it is added: *ὅπου καὶ ὁ κύριος αὐτῶν ἐσταυρώθη*. This of course identifies. *Αὐτῶν*, i. e. the Lord of the prophets or witnesses, instead of *ἡμῶν*, *our*, as the vulgate text has it. Undoubtedly the emended text is preferable; because the object here is, to make a comparison between the persecution and death of the witnesses and that of the Saviour.

(9) And the people and tribes and tongues and nations look upon their corpses, three days and a half; and they will not permit their corpses to be laid in a sepulchre.

Βλέπουσιν, Pres. tense. Here the writer relapses into the *historical* Present, as in vs. 4—6; i. e. he represents the thing as taking place before his eyes. This is exchanged again for the Fut. *ἀφήσουσι*, in the latter part of the verse, which Fut. is designed to indicate the continued or repeated denial of burial rites; for the *repetition* of an action, i. e. continued action of the same kind, is often indicated by the Fut., Kühner's Gramm. § 44. 6. 2. Here such a Fut. is altogether in place, because burial is peseveringly refused, even down to the period when the witnesses are raised from the dead. Such changes of tense, however, are oftener found fault with, by some critics, than investigated. But surely the writer of the Apocalypse does not stand justly chargeable with any impropriety here.

Ἐκ τῶν λαῶν, etc., comp. the Hebrew מִן, *some of, a part of*, which is often employed as a noun; or *ἐκ* may be equivalent to *οἱ ἐκ*, although I prefer the former meaning, inasmuch as it does not comprehend the *whole*, like the latter. I have translated, however, without reference to the mode of expression by means of the *ἐκ*. The meaning plainly must be, not that *all* nations were actually assembled in the city, in order to insult the corpses of the dead, but that in a great city like Jerusalem, many foreigners of different nations were present, (as is usual in such places), and the unburied witnesses were openly exposed to the gaze of all, however polluted and impious they might be. It is a circumstance which greatly heightens the indignity done to the dead, that they should be exposed to the gaze of polluted foreigners.

Three days and a half, (like 3½ years = 42 months = 1260 days), amounting to half of the sacred number seven. This doubtless is one reason for choosing here the period of 3½. But the reason why *days* in this case are chosen, seems plainly to be, because the dead bodies could not remain beyond such a length of time, without putrefaction and dissolution. The Saviour remained in his grave but three days, i. e. one whole day and a portion of two others. But here, since vs. 1—3 of this chapter mention a period of *three and a half*, so it is consonant with the context to continue the same number of three and a half in the text before us. If, as many interpreters assume in explaining the Apocalypse, every day is equal to a *year*, how then is it, we may well ask, that dead corpses could lie there, in such a climate, for three and a half years, and not be entirely consumed?—But we need not contend any more with such exegesis.

Οὐκ ἀφήσουσι, *Who* will not permit? Evidently the people or in-

habitants of the city. Here *τὰ πτώματα* (plur.) is employed, which of course makes it plain that the preceding *πτῶμα* is used generically.

Were one disposed to look for *specific* facts here, he might easily find correspondent ones in history. The foreign Jews and the Idumeans rushed into the city during the investment of it by the Romans; and here, one might say, are the nations and tribes who come to gaze on the martyrs. But I am so far from believing that this would be a proper method of interpretation, that I regard even the specification of the holy city itself, in this chapter, as only a symbolical method of designating what was to come upon the persecuting Jews as a people. Jerusalem here, as in numberless cases in the O. Testament, is the representative of the whole land, or of the whole nation. The picture is more striking and animated, in consequence of its being made specific in the representation.

(10) And those who dwell in the land rejoice over them and make themselves merry, and they will send presents to each other, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell in the land.

Χαίρουσιν, historical Pres. again; *εὐφραίνονται*, the same.—*Πέμψουσι*, Fut. employed as above; see on v. 9. In this way variety of manner is introduced.

Κατοικοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς must plainly mean, *the inhabitants of the country and city.* On another occasion (Rev. 6: 10), Ewald, to make out his view of the writer's plan, asserts that this expression is *generic.* But what have all the inhabitants of the world to do with this event? How could they all come to look on the corpses and insult them, or have sent mutual presents during only three and a half days? And, in reference to the last part of the verse, how could *all* the inhabitants of the earth have been tormented by the two witnesses, during only 1260 days? Ewald passes these matters with a—*haud anxie quaerendum!*

Δῶρα πέμψουσιν ἀλλήλοις, a very usual custom everywhere, on occasions of uncommon joy and festivity; see Neh. 8: 10—12. Esther 9: 19—23.—*Ἐβασάνισαν*, comp. vs. 5, 6 above. Or it may mean, not the infliction of miraculous judgments, but severity of rebuke for sin. The former, however, is the most appropriate, and therefore the most probable.

It is thus that the enemies of Christ and his faithful witnesses exult over the supposed downfall and extinction of their reprovers. But 'the triumphing of the wicked is short.'

(11) Then, after three days and a half, the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon those who beheld them.

Πνεῦμα ζωῆς ἐκ θεοῦ, i. e. the spirit of life which God, the author of

life, imparts; so in Gen. 2: 7. Job 33: 4, "The spirit of God hath made me, the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."—*Εἰσῆλθεν ἐν αὐτοῖς*, i. e. *entered into* [and dwelt] *in them;* for so we find *ἐν* employed, even among the classic writers, where the idea of going to or entering a place, etc., is conjoined with the idea of remaining or acting there; see Rob. Lex. *ἐν*, No. 4, and N. Test. Gramm. § 113. Note 2.

Ἔστησαν ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας αὐτῶν, taken from Ezek. 37: 10; where also the breath of life from God is spoken of in the same manner as here. *To stand upon their feet* means to rise from the recumbent posture of the dead, and exhibit the phenomena of life and action.—*Φόβος μέγας κ. τ. λ.* is certainly a very natural circumstance; for such terror was to be expected in consequence of such a miraculous resurrection. *Fear falling upon* is a usual Hebrew idiom; and the phrase is very expressive, for it represents fear as coming suddenly, unexpectedly, and unavoidably.

Here the Aorist is employed in the verbs throughout the verse; exactly in the manner of the Hebrew prophets, who so often represent that which is to come as already having taken place, either because it has passed before them in vision (which is the case here), or because in this way they can indicate the *certainty* of the events predicted. But this method of employing a Praeterite tense, viz. in order to designate the *certainty* of the Future, is not peculiar to the Hebrews alone; the Greeks often practised the same thing, and for the same reason; see Kühner's Greek Gramm. § 443. 2, where are many examples; see also § 15, p. 241 of Vol. I. *Φόβος* may be taken here in the sense of *amazement;* or it may be construed as meaning *terror*, i. e. fear lest the witnesses should again torment them.—The Part. *θεωροῦντες* is here employed as an Imperf.; see Gramm. § 173. 2. 1 Pet. 1: 11. Acts 7: 26 al. saepe. Such cases are by no means unusual.

This *resurrection* from the dead is the more appropriate here, inasmuch as the witnesses had, like their Lord and Master, been slain at Jerusalem. He rose from the dead after three days; they in like manner rise, and in nearly the same time.

(12) And they heard a loud voice from heaven, saying to them: Come up hither! And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.

Ἤκουσαν, some Codices read *ἤκουσα*; which with Ewald I deem preferable, as it varies the narrative, and makes it more graphic and lively. As John sees and hears all that is done and said, so *ἤκουσα* might well be here employed.—*Ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ, in a cloud;* so the Saviour ascended, Acts 1: 9; and so probably Elijah, 2 Kings 2: 11.

One question remains. Are these *actual and literal facts*, viz. not only the death of two witnesses, but their exposure in the streets of the

holy city, and their resurrection and ascension? I cannot hesitate to answer, that the whole scene is here mere *symbol*, passing in vision before the eye of the seer; comp. Ezek. xxxvii. The meaning, however, which plainly lies at the basis, is, that Christians, and specially faithful Christian teachers, would be persecuted during the invasion of Judea and the investment of its capital; that some would be put to death; that the enemies of Christianity would exult in the belief that they had extinguished this hated religion; that, in the meantime, "the blood of the martyrs would become the seed of the church;" that the cause of Christ would gain ground and triumph over all opposition; that his faithful servants will be admitted "to glory and honor and immortality," as the high reward of their fidelity and zeal; and finally, that the enemies of Christianity would be made to see all this, and be filled with amazement and consternation.

(13) And in that same hour was a great earthquake, and a tenth part of the city fell, and there were destroyed by the earthquake seven thousand men; and the rest became terrified, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

Σεισμὸς μέγας, see a like earthquake after the death of Christ, accompanied by the resurrection of many saints, Matt. 27: 50—54; and again, when Jesus rose from the dead, Matt. 28: 2. The idea seems to be, that the tombs are thrown open by such a commotion of the earth. —*Ὀνόματα ἀνθρώπων*, see, on the use of *ὄνομα* in such cases, the note on Rev. 3: 4. It is specially employed in cases where an *enumeration*, as from a catalogue of enrolment, is implied.

As to *the tenth part of the city*, see on the number *ten*, under Rev. 2: 10. It means a comparatively small part.—*Seven* thousand men involved in this destruction, comports with the usage of this book as to the number seven; and also with the probable proportion of the inhabitants involved in a destruction of the *tenth* part of the city. Comp. also 2 Kings 24: 16. So much however of the divine judgments as had thus far been inflicted, is to be regarded, rather in the light of a *pledge* for the full accomplishment of the threatenings that had been uttered, than as the accomplishment itself. The seventh and last trumpet has not yet been sounded. The consummation, therefore, cannot have yet arrived.

Plain as this seems to my own mind, yet some distinguished recent interpreters have laboured to support a very different view of the subject. Ewald finds, in the passage before us, evidence that the author means to spare his beloved holy city, and to represent it as saved from impending ruin by penitence and reformation. So also Bleek (ut sup. p. 272), and De Wette (Einleit., Apoc.), represent the Jews as *saved by penitence*, and appeal to v. 13 here in support of this opinion. Of

course they regard the remainder of this chapter as announcing no catastrophe; and they find one only in chap. xii—xix, the matter of which is somehow connected, according to them, with the sounding of the last woe-trumpet. It becomes necessary, then, to examine well here, whether the words: *οἱ λοιποὶ ἔμφοβοι ἐγένοντο κ. τ. λ.* do in themselves fairly imply what these critics gather from them.

That the words in themselves are capable of a *good* sense, i. e. that they might well be employed to designate true repentance and conversion, is not to be denied; for Rev. 14: 7 (comp. 16: 9) will show this. But that they do of *necessity* imply anything more than a temporary impression made by divine judgments, is plainly an erroneous assumption. The N. Testament is full of the like idiom, when speaking of men according to the external development made at a particular time, when they are deeply impressed by divine judgments, wonderful miracles, or powerful preaching. So Jesus was *δοξαζόμενος* by all in the synagogue at Nazareth, and yet the same individuals who applauded him, soon led him forth to cast him down a precipice; see Luke 4: 15 seq. So the whole multitude of Jews who had seen his miracles, on another occasion, are said "to have been filled with fear, and to have glorified God," Luke 5: 26. The same thing for substance may be found in Luke 17: 12—18. 23: 47. 18: 43. Matt. 9: 8. 15: 31. Acts 4: 21. So Felix *trembled* at the preaching of Paul, Acts 24: 25. Herod heard John *gladly* and *did many things* in consequence of it, Mark 6: 20. The stony ground hearers *received the word with joy*, yet they soon became offended, Matt. 13: 20, 21. Many of the Jews *believed* on Jesus, who nevertheless soon forsook him, John 2: 23—25. 8: 30 seq. Many *became disciples*, who soon left him, John 6: 60—66. Simon Magus himself *believed*, Acts 8: 13. Ps. 106: 12, "Then they [the rebellious Jews] believed his words, they sang his praise." In all these and many more texts of the like kind, it is easy to perceive, that the sacred writers have merely said *what appeared to be matter of fact* from profession, or from temporary outward demeanour. We must consult the context, i. e. the history of such cases, in order to know whether the *glory*, or *belief*, or *fear*, or *discipleship*, in question is genuine and permanent, or only temporary and apparent.

The nature of the case before us shows, that only a temporary fear and praising of God is connected with the present instance. For what says the very next verse? *The third woe is yet to come.* But how so, if it is averted by real penitence and reformation? And besides this, it is obvious to remark, that the nature of the writer's plan forbids us to adopt the interpretation of Ewald and others. That plan is not yet consummated; and nothing seems to be plainer, than that consummation is to be expected; yea that it is directly and plainly declared in

v. 14. Indeed, when we view the whole case, either in the light of the general plan of the work, or in that of N. Testament philological usage, we may well say, that the cases are rare, at the present day, where an exegesis appears more arbitrary than in the present instance; I mean the exegesis adopted here and defended by Bleek, De Wette, and Ewald.

(14) The second woe hath passed; behold! the third woe cometh quickly.

But on whom is this to fall, if the views of Ewald be adopted? The *consummation* is of course arrested, if he has rightly interpreted v. 13. Not so, however, does the author himself seem to view the subject. He appears to consider all which had taken place only as a prelude or pledge of what was yet to come.

(15) And the seventh angel sounded, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying: The kingdom of this world has become [the kingdom] of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever.

The vulgate text has *λέγουσαι* and *ἐγένοντο αἱ βασιλεῖαι*, both evidently attempts at emendation, and inferior to the corrected text in point of authority. Some critics are offended at *λέγοντες* (masc.), since the subject is plur. *fem.*, *φωναί*. But this is no uncommon case; for the *constructio ad sensum* is employed, Gramm. § 128. 5. *b*. The *persons* who utter the voice are regarded as speaking; hence *λέγοντες*. See the remarks on *αἱ . . . ἑστῶτες* in v. 4 above, with the references. In the other case, *βασιλεῖαι τοῦ κόσμου* was regarded as the more correct expression, because it accords better with the usual custom of regarding and speaking of these kingdoms as *many*. But here the view of the writer was not correctly apprehended. The kingdoms of the world are many, considered in themselves; but in reference to the sway of Satan, there is only *one* kingdom—ruled over by "the god of this world." That dominion which he once had, is now transferred to another Lord, and thus the *kingdom* is spoken of as one or in the singular. In respect to the scriptural view of Satan's *dominion* over the unbelieving world, see 2 Cor. 4: 4. John 14: 30. Eph. 6: 12. Col. 1: 13. Rev. 12: 17. 20: 8.

The kingdom of this world has become [the kingdom] *of our Lord and of his Christ.* That *βασιλεία* may be mentally supplied before the second clause in the Gen., is plain; but this is not necessary, since *γίνομαι* may govern the Gen. here. The appellation *Lord*, applied to God the Father, is after the manner of the Septuagint, which translates יְהוָה by *κύριος*. The distinction here made by *Lord* and *Christ*, is the same as appears in Ps. ii, to which Psalm the expressions here evidently refer.—*Βασιλεύσει*, i. e. *κύριος βασιλεύσει*; but still, *κύριος σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ αὐτοῦ*.

The usage of this book, in respect to the praises and thanksgivings of the heavenly host, should be duly considered, in order to obtain a proper view of passages like the present. It is only when some great and deeply interesting event is about to take place, or has taken place, that such passages are introduced. Thus in chap. 5: 8 seq., when the Lamb was about to open the book with seven seals; in 7: 9 seq., when the servants of God have been sealed in their foreheads and rendered safe; then, in the passage before us, at the consummation of the first act in the august drama. So in the second part of the drama; 12: 10 seq., on account of the victory over Satan; 14: 2 seq., in prospect of the victory of the Lamb with his redeemed; 15: 2 seq., when preparation has been made to execute his judgments upon the enemies of the church; 18: 20 seq., a triumphal song over fallen spiritual Babylon.

The only difficulty in the case before us is, how far the expression *βασιλεία κ. τ. λ.* is to be considered as extending. The proper answer to this question is: So far as the nature of the case will admit. One powerful and bitter enemy of Christianity is now, or is speedily to be, put down. The judgments of heaven, which had been so gradually proceeding, and seemingly so slow, are immediately to be consummated. The triumph of Christianity over opposing and embittered Judaism, is to be completed. "Their place and nation are now to be taken away." The progress of the gospel can no longer be stayed by them. It is not necessary to suppose that all this has been already done, as soon as the seventh trumpet sounds, i. e. that all the world has been at once converted. A confident *anticipation* here, that the Gospel will now have free course and be glorified, is sufficient for the purposes of the writer. Such an anticipation he ascribes to the heavenly world. How much the writer means to present as having already been actually done, appears in the sequel, vs. 17, 18; where we may more appropriately consider it.

The Apocalyptist does not tell us from whom the triumphal song in this verse proceeds. But as he specifically names the twenty-four elders in the next verse, analogy with 4: 8 seq. and 5: 8 seq. would lead us to ascribe the first shout of triumph to the four living creatures, as standing nearest the throne and taking the lead in the worship of heaven.

(16, 17) And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying: We give thanks to thee, Lord God Almighty, who art and wast, that thou hast resumed thy great power and shown thyself as king.

Respecting *the twenty-four elders*, see on chap. 4: 4 seq.—*Ἔπεσαν*, Aor. II. third plur., of the Alexandrine form, or Aor. I. of the later Greek. It denotes the attitude of profound adoration.—*Κύριε, ὁ θεὸς*

ὁ παντοκράτωρ = אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה צְבָאוֹת.—Ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν gives intensity to the description.—*Εἴληφας, hast assumed* and dost still hold thy dominion, an appropriate sense of the Perfect; Gramm. § 136. Note 2. b. —Ἐβασίλευσας, *hast become king*, or *shown thyself as king*, or *acted as king*. The Aor. designates action in past time; but here it is scarcely distinguishable in meaning from the Perf., for it implies that the office of king has been resumed and still remains; although this last shade of meaning may not, perhaps, have been before the mind of the writer; Gramm. § 136. 3. Note. Such a usage is not uncommon among the classics; see Kühner's Gramm. § 441. 6. § 444. The Aor. is often employed with the Perf. or Pluperf. when *completion* is the prominent idea, rather than *continuance;* or when continuance is sufficiently implied by the context. Ib.

(18) The nations indeed were enraged, and thine indignation came; and the time of the dead, that they should be vindicated, and a reward be given to thy servants, the prophets and the saints, even to those who fear thy name, small and great; and to destroy those who have destroyed the land.

Here Ewald appeals to ἔθνη as meaning *Gentiles*, i. e. heathen in distinction from Jews. But this will by no means hold with certainty. It is not unfrequent to call the Israelites גּוֹי and גּוֹיִם, sometimes in a *good*, mostly in a *bad* sense; for they are called *heathen* (as among us), when they act like heathen. See and comp. in both respects, Gen. 35: 11. 12: 2. Ps. 33: 12. Is. 1: 4. 9: 2. 26: 2. 49: 7. Ps. 2: 1, רֹגְזוּ גּוֹיִם applies, as the context shows, principally to rebellious Jews. What then could be more appropriate here, than to call the persecutors of Christians ἔθνη.—Ὠργίσθησαν refers particularly to the exasperation that led to the slaying of the witnesses, or in general to the rage manifested in destroying Christians.—Ἦλθεν ἡ ὀργή σου, i. e. 'When thou hadst suffered them to manifest *their* rage for the appointed time, then *thine own* indignant retribution followed. The sounding of the last trumpet has completed thy work.'

Ὁ καιρὸς τῶν νεκρῶν, i. e. the time in which they will be avenged or vindicated; the time in which the supplication of the martyrs (6: 9—11) that was accepted, is answered. So the Inf. κριθῆναι, added for the sake of explanation, clearly shows. Heinrichs has pronounced this Inf. an *asperior structura;* many of nearly the same nature, however, may be found, both active and passive, by examining Winer's N. Test. Gramm. § 45. 3. If it were necessary to supply an object before the Inf. here, αὐτούς might of course be mentally supplied; but the examples in Winer show, that the Inf. is often used for explanation, without any express reference to an object. The article τοῦ before κριθῆναι and δοῦναι would render the passage more facile to the common reader. But still, it is unnecessary.

Κρίνω, like שָׁפַט, is generic, and signifies either to *acquit* or to *condemn*, (*to judge* includes both), as the context requires. Here the *dead*, i. e. the martyrs, are to be *vindicated*. So the Hebrew שָׁפַט, Is. 1: 17. Ps. 10: 18. 26: 1. 1 Sam. 24: 16. 2 Sam. 18: 19, 31. Ps. 43: 1. So *κρίνω* in Heb. 10: 30 et al.

. *Δοῦναι* stands connected with *καιρός* mentally supplied: 'The *time* has now come, *to give the reward*, etc.,' i. e. to bestow the promised reward.—*Δούλοις* is generic, comprehending all who serve God truly. *Προφήταις καὶ ἁγίοις*, *prophets* such as the witnesses are, and *saints* of distinguished piety and character.—*Τοῖς φοβουμένοις*, like *δούλοις*, comprehends again all Christians; while *μικροῖς καὶ μεγάλοις* are specific, and include all the classes who can come within the meaning of the promise.

Διαφθεῖραι . . . γῆν, viz. *καιρὸς διαφθεῖραι κ. τ. λ.*—In the first place *κριθῆναι* is generic; for *vindicating the dead* will include the reward of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked. Next come the specifications, viz. first, the reward of martyrs and saints of every class; and then, the destruction of persecutors. In this way all is plain, natural, and easy.

Ewald, instead of interpreting this verse as having relation to the conclusion of the first catastrophe, (which indeed he does not admit), regards it as "*Praeludium ad omnes visiones sequentes*, i. e. as the prelude or sum of contents to chap. 12: 1—22: 5. Nothing, as it seems to me, can more effectually disturb and confuse the simplicity of the writer's plan, than such a view of it.

(19) And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of his covenant appeared in his temple; and there were lightnings, and voices of thunder, and earthquake, and large hail.

We must call to mind that all here is *symbol*. The temple of God on earth was a *pattern* of the heavenly one, as conceived of by the Jews; Heb. 8: 1—5. In this temple, the *ark of the covenant* was deposited in the most holy place, and none but the high-priest, once in a year on the great day of atonement, was permitted to see or approach it. When the Saviour expired, the veil that concealed the most holy place was rent, Matt. 27: 51, thus indicating the end of the ancient dispensation. Here is another symbol expressing still more significantly, that Judaism is now at its close. No longer is the ritual of the temple to be kept up. Even the most holy place is thrown open to the eyes of all. God is now to be approached by every spiritual worshipper for himself in the name of the great High-Priest, the minister of the sanctuary above, Heb. 8: 2. 9: 8.

Such I conceive to be the simple meaning of this passage. Yet

Ewald refers it to the ark of the covenant which the Jews supposed Jeremiah to have carried away, (when the temple was about to be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar), and secreted on Mount Sinai, or in some unknown place. On the appearance and triumph of the Messiah, this ark, they supposed, would be restored, and remain forever in the new temple that was to be built. See this fable at large in the remarks above, on 2: 17. But how this exegesis can be admissible I do not see; for why does the writer employ ὤφθη here, if the *restoration* or *bringing back* merely of the ark of the covenant is meant? It is a very inappropriate word, to say the least. Plainly it stands directly connected with the ἠνοίγη of the preceding clause, and the meaning is, that in consequence of the most holy place being now opened, the ark there deposited makes its appearance. If Jeremiah did carry away the ark of the covenant, (a thing in itself utterly incredible), it was that of the temple on *earth*, not of that in heaven. Why should we suppose, that the author of such a book as the Apocalypse believed in fables so putid as these? That they were in circulation when he lived, I would not deny, because 2 Macc. 2: 4—7 seems to indicate this; but I do not find in the Apocalypse any satisfactory evidences that the writer of it believed in such things. Ἠνοίγη, Aor. 2. pass. irreg. formed as if the οι in the old root (ἀνοίγω) were immutable and could not be shortened.

The remainder of the verse indicates more directly still the work of destruction which followed the blast of the seventh trumpet. The lightning and thunder alone might be nothing more than the ensigns of God's awful presence and majesty; as in 4: 5. Even when earthquake is added, there may still be no more than a symbol of *approaching* destruction, as in 8: 5. But when *hail* is joined with them, this is the sign that the work is completed; see and comp. 16: 18—21. This last symbol may be borrowed from the plague of hail, Ex. 9: 23—25; but more probably it was taken from Joshua 10: 11. Here then are all the indications of *catastrophe* which are found in 16: 18—21, excepting that the writer has not announced the actual destruction itself so plainly and fully here as there. But he has given the triumphal song which it called forth; comp. Ps. xviii. and Is. xiv., which are of the like tenor with this, particularly if we compare them with v. 18 here. Is it not natural to suppose, moreover, that what the seven thunders uttered, (but which John was forbidden to relate, 10: 3, 4), is here also passed over in silence? Such a view affords an easy and obvious solution of that passage. But, independently of the declaration in 16: 17 (γέγονε), all else here is of the same tenor as there, and here are all the *insignia* of catastrophe which are to be found there. Why should we allow catastrophe then in one case, and deny it in the other? And specially may we ask this question, when the very nature of the *trichotomy* and of the

heptades employed by the writer; the express declaration of the angel in 10: 5—7; and the annunciation of the *last* woe in 11: 14; all demand a consummation here of the first catastrophe. I cannot think any point in the plan of the Apocalypse to be, on the whole, clearer than this. And with such a view of the subject, I am unable to coincide with Bleek, Ewald, and others, in their opinion respecting this matter. In some way unaccountable to me, they suppose the writer to put off the catastrophe until the close of the next great division of the Apocalypse.

SECOND CATASTROPHE, OR DESTRUCTION OF THE ROMAN PERSECUTING POWER: CHAP. XII—XIX.

The Jewish power in Palestine, which had hitherto made such formidable resistance to the progress of Christianity and persecuted unto death so many of its professed disciples, has now been crushed. The Romans come, and "take away both their place and their nation."

The Jewish power, moreover, it should be here called to mind, had from the first appearance of Christianity, been opposed to its development. It had not, indeed, been always in a state of actual and vigorous warfare against it. But so often as particular circumstances occurred, which called forth its hostile energies, it had not ceased to exert them. Nor should it escape our consideration here, that this power had its seat in the same region where Christianity originated. Of course it could act upon it more effectually and perniciously than any other opposing enemy, during its earliest development. Until very near the commencement of the Jewish war, it was not only the principal and the oldest, but the most bitter enemy of the Christian church.

From these circumstances we may derive a satisfactory reason, why John commences his work with the overthrow of the Jewish persecuting power; for this was first in order, and until quite recently, it had been first in point of making dangerous opposition. But not long before the time when the Jewish war broke out, Rome was set on fire by Nero, and a bitter and bloody persecution of the Christians under his dominion was soon commenced, in order that he might throw upon them the odium of that transaction. This was carried on with such fury and cruelty, that Christians abroad, particularly in the great cities where the Romish magistracy exercised the most effectual sway, had everything to fear from it. Rome was now the mistress of the world. Every place was filled with her soldiery, and trembled before her rebuke. How could a small and feeble band of Christian disciples, resist a power so universally acknowledged and felt?

The dangers and vexations of Christians, moreover, were greatly increased, by the awakened and strenuous opposition of the idolatrous *priesthood* among the heathen. Already had many of their temples begun to be forsaken, their own character as idol-priests to fall into disrepute, and their influence to be abridged. Could they stand by as idle spectators, unconcerned with events like these? It is not to be supposed. Hence not only

the *beast* or persecuting civil power, but the *false prophet* or persecuting religious power, was fully bent upon the destruction of Christianity.

I am aware, that it has been made a question: Whether the persecution under Nero extended beyond the city and neighborhood of Rome? But this question I have already discussed; Vol. I. § 13. p. 222 seq. I will merely remark here, that the heathen abroad, for many years after Christianity began to spread, confounded Jews and Christians together, without making any distinction between them. Hence, when the Jewish war commenced, (as it did shortly after Nero had begun his persecution), and was carried on with such unexampled fury and bitterness on the part of the Jews, it was a matter of course, that Christians everywhere would be suspected and treated with severity, on the ground that they were supposed to be Jews. If now we add to this, their proselyting spirit, and their contempt of idolatry and of Gentile rites and superstitions, and also their success in winning disciples—how can it be otherwise, than that Christians would be everywhere more or less persecuted, during the Jewish war? Indeed, the internal state of the Apocalypse (chap. xiii—xix.) is enough to settle this question with every reader, who believes that John would not appeal to mere imaginary things instead of real facts, or to sufferings merely anticipated or feared, and not to those which were actually endured. But for the more complete investigation of this subject—the *extent* of Nero's persecution, I refer the reader to the Introduction, § 13.

In the midst of war raging within the bounds of Palestine, and the Neronic persecution of Christians (often as Jews) in the capital and provinces of the Roman empire, the Apocalypse was written. Hence the deep impress it bears, from beginning to end, of the state of the times. The churches addressed in the commencement of the book, are plainly addressed as being in a suffering and persecuted state. The first part of the prophetic vision, as we have already seen, bears the most palpable marks of the same state of things in Judea. The second part, to which we are now coming, is still more deeply coloured with the same tints. Even the third and last catastrophe (chap. xx.) bears the like impression; for Gog and Magog, with all their hosts, invade the camp of the saints in order to destroy them. But of the *distant* future the writer gives only the briefest possible sketch, all particulars being of course excluded.

Under such a monster as Nero, armed with the power of universal empire, Christians had no doubt everything that was fearful to expect, when his active persecution of them began. No wonder that they were faint-hearted, and needed encouragement and consolation. John was fully aware of this. He had already, in his own person, experienced the fury of the oppressor. But, while in exile from his beloved churches, the visions of God pour in consolation upon his soul. The veil of futurity is lifted up, and he sees the beast and false prophet, after all their fury and cruelty, at last subdued, trampled down, and utterly defeated in their malignant purposes. Christianity rises from its apparent fall, and triumphs over all the opposition of earth and hell. The great battle of God Almighty at last wholly decides the issue of the contest; and the lake of fire and the bottomless pit are the prisons, to which the prostrated enemies are sent.

Such is the principal outline of the second catastrophe. It follows the same general course as the first. But in its nature it is *climactic*, i. e. the danger to the church is greater than before; the persecution is more ex-

tensive; the strength of the opposition is more appalling; for where can a refuge be found from the blood-shedding hand of the master of the world, urged on by Satan and seconded by all the priesthood of idolatry? No wonder, then, that the writer enters upon this second part, with apparently more than ordinary excitement. This lofty flight, however, he sustains throughout, until the song of victory begins, when he relaxes into a state of calmer and more quiet feeling, as exhibited in chap. xviii. The main contest is now over; the greatest danger is past; and therefore he is no longer agitated with such deep concern as to the consequences of the combat.

From this general survey of the circumstances of the writer and his times, and of the great object which he had in view, let us now proceed to a more particular examination of his plan, and of the manner in which he has executed it. Already have the outlines of this plan been presented in the Introduction § 10. p. 184 seq. At present, however, a somewhat different and more minute account of it seems expedient, in order to aid the interpretation.

The events which John is about to describe, are similar in their general nature to those which he has already described. Victory over the enemies and persecutors of the church, is his theme. But in what way can he best exhibit the subject? To repeat simply what he has already said, would incur the danger of becoming tiresome and repulsive to the reader. To devise a *plan* entirely discrepant, would be apt to make an impression on the reader's mind, that the *events* described are entirely discrepant. Thus situated he chooses, (what every considerate reader will fully sanction), a medium between these two extremes. The outlines of his plan are in many respects like those exhibited in the plan of the first catastrophe. Some of the detail also bears a considerable resemblance to what has gone before. But such, after all, is the diversity both in a general and particular respect, that no one will be tempted to complain of sameness or repetition.

The general features of RESEMBLANCE are, that here as in the first part, everything is brought before the reader in the form of *symbol*. From beginning to end symbol is continuous and unremitting. Here, also, the progress of executing the divine displeasure is a *gradual* one, and the extent of symbols is measured, as before, by the number *seven*. The seven vials have a manifest and somewhat close resemblance to the seven trumpets of the first catastrophe. The symbols anticipative and significant of victory are frequent here, as they also are in the preceding part of the book; but still they are more fully developed here than in that part. Thus chap. xiv. and chap. xv. are almost wholly made up of them. Triumphal songs are here introduced at the close of partial catastrophes, and specially after the fall of the great metropolis (18: 20—19: 7), as is also the usage in the preceding part of the book. Interruptions of the progress of events are also admitted here; but they are, on the whole, somewhat fewer than before. Such is chap. xvii., the object of which is, to give an explanation of the mysterious symbols which the writer had employed; in respect to *interruptions*, comp. with chap xvii. xviii. chap. vii. and x., for among these may be reckoned, in some points of view, the lament (chap. xviii.) over the ruined metropolis, before the final destruction of the whole empire as exhibited in chap. xix. The general tenor of the whole is also like to that of the first catastrophe, in respect to its representations being grounded upon

those of the O. Testament prophets, with regard to costume. The same general style, tone, and manner of conception, reign throughout the whole of the second part of the book, as are exhibited in the preceding part. Never was a sameness of authorship more fully and certainly developed by internal evidence.

But the DIVERSITIES, at the same time, in the management of the plan, are many and very considerable. The theophany of chap. iv. is not repeated. No *sealed* book is here presented. The elders and living creatures mostly disappear from the scene; while angelic interposition, however, remains essentially the same. The plan commences by taking a *regressive* step, into the history of the past. New agents of opposition are introduced. Satan, who appears but for a moment (11: 7) under the first catastrophe, here acts a most conspicuous part, and appears to be at the height of his efforts and of his power. The beast from the sea and from the land—symbols like those in the book of Daniel—are the symbols of civil and religious domination which is opposed to the kingdom of Christ. The Redeemer makes his appearance, more than once, in person (Chap. xiv. xix.), either with those whom he has saved as symbols of further salvation, or with his elect warriors in order to enter upon the mighty contest. The metropolis is first assaulted and reduced to a ruinous condition; and when its utter desolation is about to be completed, on one hand, the triumphal song over its fall is heard, and on the other the wailings of those whose hopes and interests were centered in it. Finally the remoter provinces and distant parts of the empire, joining all their forces to avenge their ruined metropolis, are overthrown. Then follows the punishment of the beast and false prophet with their followers, the confinement of Satan for a thousand years, and the general triumph and peace of the church.

In making disclosures such as these, the writer had a very difficult and delicate task to perform. When he spake of the ruin of Judea, there was nothing to make him timid and cautious. That power was in the progress of being destroyed, at the very time when he wrote his book. But not so the Roman power. It was still at the height of its strength. The Romish magistracy, everywhere on the alert to detect and punish sedition or contumacy, would look with a jealous and malignant eye on any prediction of its fall, and specially on any apparent or suspected calumny of its rulers. What else could John do, in such circumstances, than what he has done? How could he venture upon anything more than a *symbolic* representation of the character, state, and future fall of the heathen persecuting power, which might be read and understood by Christians conversant with the O. Testament, but would be an enigma to a mere heathen reader? Had he spoken plainer, slander and seditious purposes would have been readily imputed to him, and likewise to all who possessed and approved of his book; had he spoken less plain, even his Christian readers would have been unable to enter fully into his meaning. He has chosen the middle path. It was his imperious duty to speak to Christians for their comfort and encouragement. The times demanded it, and fidelity to the cause of Christianity could not dispense with it. But he must speak *guardedly*, i. e. so that "the wise would understand, but none of the wicked would understand," Dan. 12: 10. Has he not done so? One might almost take it for granted, that a *heathen* of his day, unacquainted with the Jewish Scriptures, would regard his book as only the developments of enthusiasm and reve-

rie, and would lay it aside, perhaps, with mere pity for the mental hallucination of the author. The writer of the Apocalypse has hardly escaped from such a charge, on the part of many who regard themselves as enlightened Christians. At the same time I am fully persuaded, that a well-read Christian of that period could enter into the design of the author, and understand most, if not all, which he was expected to understand by the writer of the book.

Such are the great outlines and some of the particular features of the *second catastrophe*, as apprehended by my own mind. In the general bearing of the picture, most of the recent commentators concur; its relation, however, to the preceding part of the book, and some of its particulars in themselves considered, are viewed by a portion of critics in a different light. Controversy is not my object. If the reader finds evidences in the further developments of the Apocalypse, that the plan which I have suggested is substantially correct, he will need no other refutation of different views.

THE WOMAN CLOTHED WITH THE SUN: CHAP. XII.

It hardly need be said, that chap. xii. has given rise to an almost endless variety of expositions. If it is viewed (and so it sometimes has been) merely as an isolated piece, I know not what an interpreter can do except merely to *guess* at its meaning. Viewed however as an *introduction* to the second catastrophe, it may be regarded with very different feelings; and in this light I cannot hesitate to view it. How it can be connected with the first catastrophe, and yet any concinnity be preserved, I am not aware.

The first question which presents itself, is: Whether the writer has here taken a *regressive* step, i. e. whether, instead of describing what is yet future, he goes back to a brief sketch of the past, in order the better to enter afterwards upon the declaration of the future. An attentive examination of the whole chapter will lead, as it seems to me, to a full persuasion that he has taken such a step. That some leading facts in respect to the Saviour's entrance into the world and exit from it, are glanced at in vs. 1—6 of chap. xii, appears to be plain. How can the reader help calling to mind the birth of Christ, and the massacre at Bethlehem by Herod; the character of him who was "to rule over the nations," as disclosed in Ps. ii.; the temptation of Christ by Satan; the ascension of the Redeemer to heaven, after he had risen from the dead; and finally the persecution of the church after his death, with the protection vouchsafed to them on the part of Heaven? That Satan is here presented as following the risen and ascended Redeemer to the heavenly regions with the design of annoying him, must strike every well-informed mind, as a lively symbol of the malignity and bitterness with which the enemy of God and man pursued Jesus and his disciples, at all times and on all occasions. It is a representation of the like nature with that in the book of Job (chap. i. ii.), where Satan makes his appearance among the sons of God, as an accuser of the pious. To say that Satan could have nothing to hope for from such an attempt, would be saying little to the purpose. Had he any more ground of hope, when he engaged in tempting Christ, or in leading on Judas and his band of conspirators to bring about the death of Jesus? The malignity of Satan

often leads him to overleap the bounds of sagacious prudence, and to undertake desperate enterprises.

But after all, we need not be careful or solicitous about proving a *literal* attempt of the nature described in vs. 7 seq. Enough that here is *symbol*, and that this symbol is very expressive of the malignity of Satan and his coadjutors. Nothing is too bold or desperate for him to undertake; and when foiled in one attempt, he is not dissuaded from making another. So the chapter before us represents him, and in this way it admirably depicts his true character.

A second question, which naturally follows, is: What end could the writer have in view by taking a *regressive* step, as he seems here to have done?

Several purposes seem to be accomplished by it, would be my answer to such an inquiry. A distinction—a marked distinction—is thus made between the first and second parts of the Epopee. Chap. xii. constitutes a *proem* to the second part, in like manner as chap. iv. v. are a proem to the first. The *machinery* of the second part is purposely designed by the author, as has already been stated, to be different in many respects from that of the first. Satan and his principal coadjutors, viz. the heathen emperors and priests, are here the leaders of the opposition to the kingdom and reign of the Redeemer. In order that the malice and efforts of the grand adversary may be fully displayed, the writer goes back, and begins with the Saviour's birth, and the efforts of Satan to destroy him, at that period; and then he touches upon his ascension to heaven, and the subsequent persecution of Christians through Satanic influence. The protection of the church in Judea, and the flight of Christians to Pella, (probably alluded to in the description of the woman's flight to the wilderness, vs. 14 seq.), served only to exasperate Satan more and more. When he has accomplished his utmost in Judea, and after all sees Christianity still gaining ground in spite of persecution; when, moreover, he perceives that the persecuting Jewish power is about to be finally humbled and prostrated; then he turns with burning malice to other parts of the world, in order to stir up persecutions there against the "seed of the woman." How he succeeded in his subsequent efforts, the sequel of the Apocalypse is designed to show.

If we should insist that the whole plan and execution of John's Apocalypse must be strictly *chronological*, and exhibit a regular sequency like a book of *annals*, some difficulty might be made here by a reader disposed to take exception at any appearance of anachronism. If Nero began the persecution of Christians in November, A. D. 66. An attack was made on Jerusalem, at the same period; but the Jewish war did not really commence, until early in the spring of A. D. 67. Jerusalem was taken and destroyed in August, A. D. 70. How, it may be asked, could John represent Satan as applying himself to stir up persecution among the heathen *after* he was foiled in Judea by the destruction of the persecuting power there, when Nero actually began it *before* the Jewish war commenced?

But this question assumes what John does not assert. John represents Satan as making war against *the rest of the woman's seed*, after he was foiled in his attempts to destroy "the man-child who should rule the nations with an iron-sceptre," and the woman who bare him. In other words; Satan did his utmost to destroy Christ and his church in Judea, before he commenced stirring up active persecution abroad. But his efforts in Judea were all in vain. The church increased and strengthened under persecution. The Roman power was threatening Palestine with its legions of soldiers, even before Nero began his persecution at Rome, which would naturally abate, in some measure, hostile movements against Christians among the Jews. What John says, implies no more than that Satan, being disappointed as to his efforts in Judea, began to stir up persecution against Christians in foreign countries. Now this accords with matter of fact. The Romish

power did not persecute, until the time of Nero. The only difficulty that remains is, that if we interpret vs. 6, 14, as having respect to the *flight of Christians to Pella*, there is the appearance of *anachronism*, because Nero began persecution before the flight took place. But in an Epopee like the Apocalypse we are surely not bound to the rigid rules of a book of *annals*. And even if this be insisted on in the present case, it seems quite plain, that as Jews and Christians were confounded in the Roman provinces, the fiercest part of the Neronian persecution would take place, only after the Jews had become the *civil* enemies of the Romans, and of course sometime after the war against Palestine had commenced. In the meantime, before Nero's death in June A. D. 68, it is highly probable that the flight to Pella of large numbers of Christians had taken place; for this was some eighteen months after the war had been raging. This flight would enrage Satan, and induce him to make more strenuous efforts to stir up the heathen persecution.

My limits do not permit further discussion here. I must remit the reader to the Appendix to Vol. I., where the allegation of *anachronism* in respect to the writer's plan as represented by me, is more fully discussed.

It is thus that the rage and malice of the great adversary at a preceding period are portrayed, in order that we should be prepared to look with the deeper interest on the time to come, and see what he undertakes to accomplish. Forthwith, after these views of Satan and his efforts in antecedent times, the writer presents us with his coadjutors and servants, i. e. the Pagan imperial power at the head of the world, and an idolatrous priesthood, both combined and determined to root out the religion of Christ.

If no other purposes were answered by the *regressive* step which the author has taken, than those already noticed, these would be amply sufficient to defend his method. But we may cast our eye still farther on, beyond the limits to which we have now come. When the Apocalypse was written, Christians were under a bitter and bloody persecution from the Roman power, stirred up and set on by Satan the enemy of all good. Would it not then answer the purpose of encouragement, to bring in a striking manner before the minds of those who were thus persecuted, what had already happened to their Lord and Master himself? Him also, even from his birth to his death, Satan had assailed. His death was brought about by Satanic persecution. But lo! he triumphs. He ascends to heaven beyond the reach of Satan and his instruments. The church also, from the bosom of which the Saviour came forth when he "became in all things like to his brethren," had been persecuted. Many Christians, moreover, had fallen by persecution; but the church continued to rise the more. Many had fled to the wilderness; but there God had provided for them. Terrible then as the attacks of Satan were, through the instruments which he employed, yet at last they would be of no avail to stop the progress of Christianity. As the Saviour and the church had triumphed, so would the same cause continue to triumph, while all its enemies and persecutors would be finally destroyed.

Who now, in the light which such a consideration presents, can pronounce the chapter before us to be an irrelevant or useless episode, or regard it as an invention of the writer designed principally to entertain the reader? Far higher and nobler ends than these the author had in view But still, I would not wholly exclude subordinate designs from his purpose. While he doubtless designed that the symbolic representation before us should interest his readers, he also intended that it should serve to distinguish a break in his discourse, just where he wished to make one, viz. at the close of the first and the beginning of the second ca-

tastrophe. Can any one reasonably complain that both a moral and a rhetorical purpose is subserved at the same time?

One question still remains: Who or what is represented by the woman so splendidly apparelled? Not ancient *Judaism* as such, as Eichhorn seems to maintain. Not the virgin Mary, simply and personally considered; for what is said in vs. 14 seq. appears to comprise too much to be applied to any single personage who is merely human. It must then be the CHURCH; the church not simply as *Jewish*, but in a more generic and theocratic sense—*the people of God*. From the church, Jesus sprang *κατὰ σάρκα*. From the *Christian* church, considered as Christian, he could not spring; for this took its rise only after the time of his public ministry. But from the bosom of the *people of God* the Saviour came. This church, *Judaical* indeed (at the time of his birth) in respect to rites and forms, but to become *Christian* after he had exercised his ministry in the midst of it, might well be represented here by the woman which is described in chap. xii. To a Jew this would not appear at all unusual, but altogether appropriate. The *daughter of Zion* is a common personification of the church in the O. Testament; and in the writings of Paul, the same image is exhibited by the phrase: *Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all*, i. e. of all Christians, Gal. 4: 26. The main point before us is, the illustration of that church, ancient or later, under the image of a *woman*. If the Canticles are to have a spiritual sense given to them, it is plain enough of course how familiar such an idea was to the Jews. Whether the woman thus exhibited as a symbol be represented as *bride* or *mother*, depends of course on the nature of the case and the relations and exigencies of any particular passage. In the case before us, to present the church as the mother of the *human* nature of the Saviour, is altogether appropriate, and is necessary also to the design of the writer. In another view of the subject, i. e. in respect to Christ's *higher* nature, such an image would be incongruous and even absurd. But to say, that from the bosom of the church Jesus as to his human nature sprang, is both congruous and scriptural.

Such is the view which I feel constrained to take of the chapter before us. Premising such a plan, we may now, without any serious difficulty, proceed to explain the particulars of the twelfth chapter.

(1, 2) And a great wonder appeared in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and being with child she cried out with anguish and travailing pains.

Σημεῖον, like the Hebrew אוֹת, often means *something extraordinary, something miraculous, ostentum.* The meaning is here augmented by *μέγα*, which has the sense, in such a connection, of something extraordinary or adapted to excite wonder. It can qualify *σημεῖον* here in no other tolerable sense.—*Οὐρανῷ, the air?* or is the heaven *above*, i. e. the welkin, meant? Inasmuch as the sun, moon, and stars, are represented as adorning the woman, it would seem most congruous to suppose that the highest region of the air is meant. There too the assault of Satan, "the prince of the power of the air," i. e. of the aerial host or evil spirits, takes place; and in this way the whole is more easily and naturally explained. See Exc. I. No. II. 5. *c.*

Περιβεβλημένη τὸν ἥλιον, i. e. surrounded with a glorious splendour

like that of the sun. Comp. Rev. 1: 16. 10: 1. Cant. 6: 10. This last passage was probably before the writer's mind.—*Ἡ σελήνη . . . αὐτῆς*, another addition to the splendour of her appearance; and aptly is it thrown in, for the moon serves to illuminate the lower part of the person, while the brighter light of the sun surrounds the superior part.—*Ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς . . . δώδεκα.* Eichhorn appeals to Gen. 37: 9 to illustrate this; but there only *eleven* stars are mentioned. Plainly the reference is to the twelve tribes, as in Rev. vii. The church is adorned with the splendour of these twelve stars, i. e. with these twelve luminaries distinguished among and above the other nations of the earth. The stars here are so many gems or sparkling diamonds in the crown or tiara worn by the woman. In like manner Isaiah speaks of the *glory* of Lebanon, and of the *glory* of the Gentiles, as contributing to adorn the Messianic church.

Ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα, i. e. *ἔχουσα ἔμβρυον* or *τέκνον ἐν γαστρί*. It is usual, however, to employ only the first or elliptical form, for the sake of breviloquence.—*Ὠδίνουσα*, used frequently for the *pains of travail*.—*Βασανιζομένη*, Mid. voice, *agonizing herself*.—*Τεκεῖν*, the Inf. of purpose or object; agonizing herself in order that, or so that, she may bring forth her child.

(3) And another wonder appeared in heaven; for lo! a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven crowns.

Satan is here represented under the image of a *dragon*, see v. 9. Dragons were supposed to be huge serpents of the desert (anacondas?); see Bochart, Hieroz. II. pp. 428—440. The name *ὄφις* or *δράκων* seems to have been given to Satan by the Jews, in reference to his temptation of Eve in the form of a serpent; comp. 2 Cor. 11: 3. Rev. 20: 2.—*Πυρρός*, *fiery*, i. e. red, an epithet expressive of his terrible appearance, and of his fierce and cruel nature; he was "a murderer from the beginning," John 8: 44. Comp. Rev. 6: 4. 17: 3, as to the *colour*, which is plainly indicative of cruelty and murder.—The *καί* before *ἰδού* I have translated *for*. It plainly marks the apodosis here, and the apodosis illustrates the preceding assertion.

Ἑπτὰ κεφαλάς κ. τ. λ, *horns* are the emblems of power; and *ten* horns augments this idea, and designates Satan as possessed of great and formidable power. The number of *heads* is limited to *seven*; which is the usual symbolic number in this book, for anything complete or ample. The heathen poets employ expressions of the like nature, in order to magnify the powers of noxious creatures. Thus *Cerberus* usually has three heads assigned to him; but Hesiod (Theog. 312) assigns him fifty, and Horace (Ode II. 13, 34) one hundred. So the Hydra of the lake Lerna, killed by Hercules, had fifty heads, (Virg. En.

VI. 576); and in Kiddushim, fol. 29. 2, Rabbi Achae is said to have seen a demon like a dragon with seven heads. More difficult is the explanation of the *position* of the horns. Were they double on the three interior heads; or was there two on the middle head, and on each of the exterior ones, while the other heads had one each? We cannot determine this question; nor is it of any moment. That emblems like these, of mere *power*, may be assigned to beings of very diverse and opposite qualities in other respects, is plain enough from the fact, that seven horns are given to the *Lamb*, in Rev. 5: 6, and then again, seven heads and ten horns to the beast which is Satan's prime minister, Rev. 13: 1. The image of *horns*, as belonging to a *serpent*, seems to take its origin from the *cerastes*. Whether the *crowns* are intended here to be merely emblems of the *regal* power of Satan, as "the *prince* of the power of the air;" or whether the idea of a *crown* in this case is derived from supposed yellow or golden tinges on the top of each head, and is employed principally in the way of ornament, i. e. in order to make the description more full and striking, it would be difficult to decide. Nothing important depends on either mode of explanation.

(4) And his tail drew along a third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them down to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bring forth, that when she should bring forth, he might devour her child.

The reader will recollect, that the dragon in this case is represented as being ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, i. e. in the upper region of the air, so that his tail may be supposed to interfere with and sweep down the stars, which, as viewed by the ancients, were all set in the visible expanse or welkin. The object of the writer here is merely to render intensive the description, which is designed to set forth the great power of Satan. So Daniel (8: 10), in describing the horn which symbolized Antiochus Epiphanes, represents it as "casting down some of the stars of heaven, and trampling upon them." Probably, however, Daniel means by *stars* the Magnates of the Jewish hierarchy. But then the nature of the symbol is like that before us. Ewald thinks that the author, in the case before us, has reference to such views as heathen traditions present, in respect to serpents which are said to have attempted to devour Cadmus, Hercules, and Nero, in their cradles. But nothing more seems to be necessary than a reference to Dan. 8: 10, in order to explain the ground of introducing such a symbol. A dragon which could sweep away the stars and cast them down (see on Rev. 6: 12), must be a formidable enemy.

As to the mixture of the Present (σύρει) and Praeter tenses (ἔβαλεν), see Gramm. § 136. 1. *b*. Note. I have rendered σύρει, *drew* (past tense), because the sentence appears better in English when formed in this way.

That the author intended to designate the solicitude with which Satan watched over the birth of the Saviour, in order that he might devise some plan for his destruction, seems plain. Compare the history, in Matt. ii, of Herod's attempt to destroy the infant Jesus. It is, however, only a single glance which the author casts at these events, for he hastens to the sequel; which, however, is presented with the same degree of brevity and conciseness.

(5) And she brought forth a man-child, who should rule all the nations with an iron sceptre; and her child was caught up to God and to his throne.

Τὸν ἄρρενα = the Heb. בֶּן זָכָר, Jer. 20: 15.—*Ὃς μέλλει ποιμάνειν κ. τ. λ*, i. e. *who would speedily rule*, etc. *To rule all nations with an iron sceptre* marks two things; first the universality of his reign, and secondly the strength or irresistible power of it. An *iron* sceptre is one which can neither be broken nor resisted. The reference here is so plain to Ps. 2: 9, that no doubt can well be raised, as to the personage who is meant in the present case. The Messiah is plainly the child to which the writer refers.

Ἡρπάσθη . . . θρόνον αὐτοῦ. At a single glance the writer surveys the whole life, death, and ascension to heaven of the Saviour, leaving us to fill up the outlines of the sketch with the history of his trials and of his persecutions by Satan. The end of all was, a complete triumph and glorification. Nor was the Child simply taken up to God. He was seated with him *on his throne* (Rev. 3: 21), being thus made *σύνθρονος* with him. There he is of course secure against all the aggressions of Satan.

(6) And the woman fled into the desert, where she hath a place prepared by God, that they might there nourish her one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Here the writer very briefly anticipated that which he has said more at large, in vs. 14 seq. As he had just briefly sketched the history of the *Son*, he here touches, and merely touches, on that of the *mother*, and then forthwith resumes his description of the immediate efforts of Satan, consequent upon the rapture of the Son.—*Ὅπου . . . ἐκεῖ*, exactly as the Heb. שָׁם . . . שָׁמָּה. *Ἐκεῖ* of course is pleonasm, so far as the necessities of language are concerned.—*Τρέφωσιν*, 3d pers. plur. with an indefinite Nom., here employed (as often elsewhere) for the *passive* voice. As to the *time*, see above on 11: 2, comp. also v. 14 below.

The *sentiment* of this verse will be considered in the sequel, when we come to resume the same subject in remarks upon vs. 14 seq.

(7) And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels.

All the attempts to explain the recently adopted reading here, *τοῦ*

πολεμῆσαι μετά (instead of the vulgate *ἐπολέμησαν κατά*), seem to have been hitherto in a measure unsatisfactory. Yet this reading is abundantly supported by the Codices. Ewald explains it by a reference to the Heb. Inf. with a לְ prefixed, which not unfrequently has the sense of a finite mode and tense; see his Heb. Gramm. § 339. 1. first edit. Heinrichs chooses [*ἦσαν*] *τοῦ πολεμῆσαι*, i. e. *intenti erant in pugnam*, as he translates it. Lücke: [*ἐγένοντο*] *τοῦ πολεμῆσαι*. Each of these follows the idiom of the Hebrew, which has variety here. Winer expresses his dissatisfaction with all the attempts hitherto made to explain this anomaly; § 45. 4. 6. I cannot well doubt, that if the reading *τοῦ πολεμῆσαι* be correct, (and so it seems to be according to the Codices), that the proper solution is to be found in the kindred use of the Heb. Infinitive. Cases of like structure with and without the לְ before the Inf., with and without הָיָה *to be* before the Inf., and with and without a definite subject, are familiar to the Heb. grammarian; see Introd. § 15. 3. *e*, for further development. The verse begins with a *καὶ ἐγένετο*, and it is easy to supply *ἐγένοντο* before *τοῦ πολεμῆσαι*, if the reader pleases. This would be true Hebraism. One other way perhaps is possible, which I have not seen suggested. In v. 1, the woman is introduced by *ὤφθη*; in v. 3, the dragon is introduced in the same way. What if *ὤφθη* should be implied here, on the introduction of a third party? The kindred *ἰδού* and *εἶδον* are frequently *implied* in this book, in cases where they are needed for regimen and are not expressed; see 4: 2—4. 7: 9. 13: 1—3. 14: 14, al. However, I prefer the other method of solution; but there would be nothing very strange or foreign from usages of breviloquence in this.

A task seemingly more difficult remains; at least, more difficult for those who are not familiar with the angelology of the Scriptures. Why is this contest between good and evil angels represented as carried on *ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ*? And what is here meant by *οὐρανῷ*?

That the Jews were accustomed to conceive and to speak of *evil* spirits as inhabiting the *air*, may be seen by referring to Exc. I. *Evil Angels*, 5. *c.* Comp. Ephes. 2: 2. 6: 12. Test. Benj. c. 3. p. 729 in Fabr. Ascens. Is. 7: 9—13, where the prophet Isaiah, in his rapture to heaven, sees Samael [Satan] and his powers violently contending in the upper regions of the atmosphere. In the present case, our author represents Satan and his angels in the same way. The Man-Child is caught up to God; Satan endeavours to follow him, in order to repeat his assaults; and then Michael and his angels contend against him, and he is overcome, and thrust down upon the earth. Michael is the *guardian-angel* of God's people or the church; see Exc. I. *Good Angels*, No. 3. All is plain and easy, when the angelology of the Hebrews is once well understood. John represents the subject here, according to the usual

popular modes of conception. In what way could he make his symbols so intelligible?

(8) Yet he did not prevail, neither was a place found for him any longer in heaven.

Καί = *yet* in cases like this; comp. Heb. וְ.—*Ἴσχυσεν*, 3d pers. sing., accords with *ὁ δράκων*, with whom are of course included his followers. The reading *ἴσχυσαν* appears to be merely a correction of grammarians. —*Οὐκ ἴσχυσεν* is a *litotes*. The meaning is: *He was overcome.*—*Οὐδὲ τόπος . . . τῷ οὐρανῷ*, i. e. he was thrust down, on this occasion, upon the earth; see v. 9. The object of the writer is to disclose the idea, that Satan, instead of succeeding in his attempt, was even removed further from the possibility of accomplishing it than ever. *Ἔτι* need not be extended indefinitely, but may be regarded as pertaining to the attempt in question.

(9) And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent who is called the devil, even Satan who deceiveth the whole world, was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

If the reader has any difficulty concerning the various representations of the Scriptures in regard to the *place* of evil angels, which now presents them as in *Tartarus*, 2 Pet. 2: 4; then as in the *desert*, Matt. 12: 43, (comp. Tobit 8: 3). Is. 13: 21. 34: 14. Rev. 18: 2; and again as in the *air*, Eph. 2: 2. 6: 12; he may perhaps find a solution of this in Exc. I. *Evil Angels*. Confinement in Tartarus or the Abyss, before the final judgment, was not constant and invariable, but temporary. In the present case, the reader is not to conceive of the earth, down to which Satan and his host were cast, as their proper and lasting place of abode, but only as the place to which they fell when worsted in the contest. But men who dwell on the earth are thenceforth to be specially annoyed by them, since their contest with the Power above, the Child caught up unto God, has come to a close. It is for the sake of bringing this distinctly before the reader's mind, that the writer has adopted this mode of representation. The sentiment is: Whenever they are brought into proximity with men, malignant spirits will forthwith assay to do them injury.

Ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος is epexegetical of *δράκων*, and the epithet *ἀρχαῖος* doubtless refers to the serpent who in ancient times tempted Eve; comp. 2 Cor. 11: 3.—*Ὁ καλούμενος διάβολος*, i. e. he who by way of eminence is called *the accuser, the traducer;* see v. 10.—*Ὁ σατανᾶς*, i. e. even he or the same who is also named *the adversary*, שָׂטָן. One might naturally expect the article before *σατανᾶς* to be omitted here; but the writer uses the word as an *epithet*, and has treated it as if it were a *Greek* epithet instead of a Hebrew one, because it was well understood.

Ὁ πλανῶν κ. τ. λ. see the illustrations of this in Exc. I. *Evil Angels*, No. 4.—Ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν γῆν, here ἐβλήθη is repeated in order to resume and carry out the construction of the sentence, which had been suspended to make way for the epithets.

(10) And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying: Now is the salvation and power and kingdom of our God, and the dominion of his Christ; For the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, he who accused them before God, day and night.

Σωτηρία, *salvation*, i. e. deliverance from the power of Satan, who had assaulted the child that was caught up to God, and had now been foiled in his last attempt.—Δύναμις καί βασιλεία, *the power and kingdom* of God, has respect to his *moral* reign. Now is secured, by the casting down of Satan, that supremacy which God is to exercise through the Messiah; and of course the ἐξουσία of Christ as Messiah, is at the same time made secure. The words of the voice in heaven are to be regarded mainly as *anticipative* of victory in respect to the future, grounded on a reminiscence of victory with regard to the past.

Ὁ κατήγωρ is a further explanation of ὁ διάβολος in v. 9. In the light of such an accuser did the ancient Jews regard Satan; see Job i. ii. Zech. 3: 1, 2. 1 Chron. 21: 1. Here the crime of the accuser is augmented by the charge, that he exercises his malignity ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός = יוֹם וָלָיְלָה, i. e. *incessantly, without intermission.* The writer has here chosen a Hebrew mode of expressing his idea. As to the *form* of the word κατήγωρ, it is plainly an abridgment of κατήγορος (the usual word), like διάκων from διάκονος. The Rabbins have the same form, viz., קַטֵּיגוֹר. See Buxt. Lex. Chald. on this word.

Ἀδελφῶν ἡμῶν, *our brethren.* This implies, that the speakers on this occasion are some of the redeemed, probably the twenty-four elders. —Κατηγορῶν αὐτῶν, *accusing them*, viz. our brethren.

If the reader has any difficulty as to the *manner* in which Satan does this, he may be referred to Job. i. ii. for the Hebrew mode of conception. Doubtless the manner here is merely Jewish *costume*, i. e. a peculiar Jewish mode of presenting the idea, that Satan maligns and accuses or slanders the pious, in order that he may in some way do them an injury. The book of Job represents him as appearing in heaven, among the sons of God, in order to prosecute his evil design. John does not expressly say this; yet ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ seems of course to imply it. But doubtless the *modus* of representation, which is Jewish, is to be attributed to the peculiar machinery of the piece; and at least the idea of diabolic malignity is thus strikingly presented to the mind.

(11) And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life, even unto death.

Αὐτοὶ ἐνίκησαν, viz. they the martyrs, who are now in heaven; for the latter part of the verse shows, that their death had already taken place.—*διὰ τὸ αἷμα . . . διὰ τὸν λόγον, by the blood . . . by the word.* This seems to be the plain and even necessary sense of *διά* here with the Accusative; and if so, then it marks the same relation, in such a position, as when it stands before the Genitive. That *διά* with the Accusative does, not unfrequently, mark the *means* by which anything is accomplished, is certain; see Winer's Gramm. § 53. c, and also Kühner's Gramm. § 605. II. 3. *b*, where are examples from the classics. So John 6: 57, *κἀγὼ ζῶ διὰ τὸν πατέρα*; comp. Rev. 4: 11. Winer indeed denies that *διά* is employed in such a sense in Rev. 12: 11 (ubi sup.); but he does not give us any better view of the subject in the room of this. I cannot well avoid the conclusion here, that *διά* in the present case stands before nouns in the Accusative which designate the *means* by which the victory was obtained. The sense is altogether appropriate for Christian martyrs.

The blood of the Lamb cleanses from all sin; and so the wiles of Satan to ensnare and ruin souls, are defeated by it. *The word of their testimony*, i. e. the word which they have testified when moved by his Spirit, is "a lamp to the feet and a light to the path." It was by *the word of truth* that they were begotten again, and became sons of God; it is this word which instructs them as to duty, and warns them as to the wiles of Satan. Comp. Rev: 1: 2, 5, 6. 5: 9, 12. 7: 14. It is then the atoning blood of Christ, and the power of his truth as applied to the hearts of men by the Spirit whom Christ sends, that Christians are enabled to triumph over the wiles and malice of Satan, even when he succeeds in causing them to be persecuted unto death.

Οὐκ ἠγάπησαν . . . θανάτου, they did not love their temporal or present life, so as to prefer it to suffering for the cause of Christ. They consented even to die, rather than relinquish their profession and their fidelity. In other words: 'So little did they value their present life, that they preferred death to apostasy.' *Ψυχή* often means *natural life.* So in Matt. 10: 39, "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it;" i. e. he that preserves his natural life by apostatizing from me, shall lose his life in another sense, i. e. his future happiness; but he that loseth his natural life on my account, shall find another life, shall attain to the blessedness of the world to come. See Luke 17: 33. John 12: 25, where the same sentiment is repeated. These passages make the one before us very clear, viz. 'They renounced the love of life, even to such an extent as to undergo death itself.'

The general import of the triumphal song is, that notwithstanding all the efforts of Satan to destroy the Saviour and his disciples, the cause of truth had triumphed; for even the martyrs who had fallen in the contest, had still achieved a glorious victory. This prepares us for the expressions of triumph in the sequel.

(12) Because of this, rejoice ye heavens, and ye who dwell therein! Wo to the earth and sea! For the devil hath come down to you, having great indignation, knowing that his time is short.

The inhabitants of the heavenly world are called upon to rejoice, because of the victories achieved by the Messiah and his faithful followers. *Οἱ σκηνοῦντες*, comp. 7: 15. 13: 6. 21: 3.—*Οὐαὶ κ. τ. λ*, is not to be construed as *wishing* woe, but as *predicting* it, on account of the disappointment and rage of Satan.—*Γῇ καὶ θαλάσσῃ*, i. e. the earth and the sea coasts with the islands, comprising all the habitable part of the world = *οἰκουμένῃ*.—*Κατέβη* in sense kindred to *ἐβλήθη* in vs. 9, 13; but *κατέβη* marks merely the fact of descent, not the manner of it by force, like *ἐβλήθη*.

Εἰδὼς ὅτι ὀλίγον καιρὸν ἔχει. The meaning is, that from the defeat which he has just experienced, Satan augurs his future subjugation; and he augurs that it will *soon* come, because the Messianic reign has now fairly commenced. Comp. v. 14. 10: 6. 11: 15—18. 13: 5. Most of these passages refer, indeed, to the triumph of the church over the persecuting *Jewish* power. But it is apposite here to refer to them; for Satan, in this sketch of *regressive* action, is represented as specially concerned with the church in Judea, where Christianity had its origin.

(13) And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who bore the man-child.

Here is resumed what was simply touched upon in v. 6 above. The sketch in this passage brings us down to the period, when the Romish persecution commenced. In the connection in which this stands, viz. as consequent on the ascension and glorification of the Saviour, it seems obvious, that the *church* is here personified by the woman who now becomes the object of Satan's rage. How well this agrees with facts, need not be insisted on, inasmuch as every reader of the N. Testament is familiar with these facts. Withal, nothing can be more natural, than that Satan, when disappointed in his persecution of the Saviour, should turn his rage upon his disciples. The church, which as to its external form was *Jewish* at the birth of the Saviour, has now, after his ascension, adopted the form of *Christianity*.

(14) And two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, that she might fly to the desert—to her place, (where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time), from the face of the serpent.

Δύο πτέρυγες τοῦ ἀετοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου, not THE *two wings of the great eagle*, but *two wings* of, etc., i. e. two wings like those of the great eagle; see Winer, § 18. 2. This means that they were strong, expansive, and of course adapted to rapid flight. The article before *ἀετοῦ* is indispensable for the special purpose of the writer, who means to designate the idea of the strongest and most rapid wings. As to the image itself, the prototype is in Ex. 19: 4, where God says of Israel, whom he had brought out of Egypt into the wilderness: "I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself," i. e. to a place where they might be devoted to his service. So David fled to the *wilderness* for safety, 1 Sam. 23: 14, 15. So Elijah fled to the wilderness for a refuge from the persecution of Jezebel, 1 Kings 19: 4 seq. These and the like cases make plain the object of the writer in the passage before us. The simple idea divested of trope is, that the church found a refuge which God had provided for her.

Εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτῆς, i. e. to a place which God had appointed or provided for her.—*Ὅπου τρέφεται ἐκεῖ*, see on *ὅπου . . . ἐκεῖ* under v. 6 above.—*Τρέφεται* indicates, by its having no agent expressed, that it is God who provides the requisite nourishment or support for her. There is doubtless an allusion in this to the manner in which Elijah was fed by the ravens, 1 Kings 17: 3—6.

Is it not plain, that in this whole representation the writer has expressed, although in a different form, what is said by the Saviour in Matt. 24: 16 seq.? So plain does this seem to my own mind, that I cannot well entertain any serious doubt respecting it.

Καιρὸν καὶ καιροὺς καὶ ἥμισυ καιροῦ, exactly the עִדָּן וְעִדָּנִין וּפְלַג עִדָּן of Dan. 7: 25, and its equivalent in Dan. 12: 7. It is the same also as the 42 months and 1260 days, in Rev. 11: 2, 3. In 11: 2, 3, moreover, and in the sequel, is given a graphic view of the persecution of the church in Judea, during the time of its invasion by the Romans. As the writer is now dwelling upon the *past*, it cannot well be doubted that he alludes here to the same period of time. Nor is there any real inconsistency between the two representations. In chap. xi. it is the *witnesses*, i. e. the teachers of Christianity, who are persecuted and slain. The mass of Christians, in the meantime, might have been, and facts show that they were, withdrawing to the *wilderness* beyond the Jordan. It has always been the aim of persecutors of the church, to destroy distinguished teachers first of all. So in the case under consideration. While Satan was raging against the church, the great body of Christians fled from the country, according to the command of the Saviour,

in Matt. 24: 14 seq. Some faithful teachers remained, as it would seem, and persevered in their work. These became martyrs; the rest "were nourished by God in the wilderness, whither they had fled." In respect to *the time, times and half a time*, I remit the reader to what is said on 11: 2, 3, and to the references there given.

When the whole is viewed in this light, it seems to be altogether congruous, and entirely accordant with the purpose of the writer. In regard to the multiplied conjectures on the subject of the *times* here mentioned, it is enough to say, that the prototype in Dan. 7: 25. 12: 7, plainly refers to the desolations caused by Antiochus Epiphanes; and since these lasted only $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, so the time here specified must be about the same period, or at any rate a moderate period of time. Accordingly, it was a matter of fact, that the Jewish war actually continued but a little longer than this period. Why should we reject, then, an interpretation which seems so plainly to be grounded on facts and on the nature of the case?

Ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ ὄφεως is to be joined with *πέτηται κ. τ. λ, flee into the wilderness . . . from the face*, i. e. from the presence, of the serpent.

(15) And the serpent cast from his mouth, after the woman, water like a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.

The imagery here is peculiar. Some serpents are said to eject from their mouths poisonous bile, when they are enraged, in order to annoy their enemy; but the image of vomiting forth a *flood of water* is unique, and invented, as it would seem, for the occasion. Or is it taken from the spouting forth of large masses of water by some of the sea-monsters? The flight of the woman on wings such as the great eagle possesses, is conceived of as being more rapid than the pursuit of the serpent or dragon; who, perceiving that he cannot overtake her, spouts forth a flood, in the hope that it may reach and arrest her. As the writer has, in this whole representation, travelled out of the bounds of nature into those of imagination, (and in the like way with respect to the locusts and the army of horsemen from the Euphrates, chap. ix.), so we need not take offence at the imagery which he employs. The woman and the dragon in the higher atmosphere; the battle in the same region between Michael with his hosts and the dragon with his; these, and several other things, are praeternatural. And so here. *Quoddam immane, prodigiosum*, is admissible in the case of Satan, and we are prepared to expect it; accordingly we find it in the text before us.

Ποταμοφόρητον, a rare word in the classics, but a very expressive one. *Immersed in the flood and borne away by it*, is the compound idea which it conveys; and its import is not even limited to this, for the adjunct idea of *destruction* or *drowning* is of course attached to it.

(16) And the earth helped the woman; yea, the earth opened its mouth, and drank up the flood which the dragon cast forth from his mouth.

As the danger in this case had become urgent by an extraordinary and unlooked for manifestation of the power of the dragon, so the remedy must be a speedy and adequate one on the part of him who gave wings to the fugitive and persecuted woman, and had provided a place for her. A deep chasm is suddenly made in the ground over which the flood was passing, and it is swallowed up and becomes harmless. *Chasms in the earth* are not in themselves considered a novel thing, being often made by earthquakes. But the time and manner in which they are made in the present case, are of course to be looked upon as extraordinary. The meaning of the whole seems plainly to be, that in circumstances of most threatening danger, God interposed in behalf of the church, and saved it from destruction. Nor is it improbable, that John had in his mind some extraordinary machinations of the persecuting Jews, about the time when the witnesses were giving their testimony, which was signally and unexpectedly defeated, as to the great body of Christians. Nor is it incongruous to suppose, that the civil and military power of the Romans, bearing down with great force upon the Jews at this period, and obliging them to seek their own personal safety, instead of pursuing schemes of vengeance upon Christians, is symbolized here by *the earth's helping the woman*. At least, all is easy and natural when interpreted in this way.

(17) And the dragon was enraged at the woman, and went away to make war with the remainder of her seed, who keep the commandments of God, and hold fast the testimony of Jesus.

In the preceding context we have seen, that when the dragon undertook to pursue the ascending Saviour and was thwarted, he turned his rage against his followers, viz. the church in Judea. In the present case he is thwarted again, and therefore turns his rage, as before, against the Christians in foreign countries, hoping still for success abroad in his warfare against them. All seems to be easy and natural when thus explained. Those whom he had just been persecuting in Judea, were *the seed of the woman*, but not all of her seed. Hence the other Christians are called *τῶν λοιπῶν τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτῆς*. Figurative language like the present is very common in the O. Testament. Zion, the daughter of Zion, etc., is everywhere in the prophets represented as the *mother* of the Jewish church, and as having many children; comp. Is. 60: 4. 66: 10—13. 54: 1. 49: 22. Gal. 4: 26, 27. See also Gal. 3: 7. Rom. 4: 16, 17. All anxious discussion here, however, whether *τῶν λοιπῶν* means simply *Jewish* or *Gentile* Christians, may be superseded as unimportant. The simple facts are, that Christians had been for some

thirty years persecuted in Judea, and that afterwards a new persecution of them elsewhere broke out under Nero, through the influence of Satan; and to this the writer appears plainly to allude in the text before us.

Τηρούντων τὰς ἐντολάς characterizes true Christians; see on Rev. 1: 3. *Ἐχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν* designates the firmness and steadfastness of martyrs. It was usual for heathen tribunals first to call on Christians, when apprehended, to renounce their Christianity, and denounce the Saviour. Those who refused to do so, were said *ἔχειν τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ*, i. e. *to hold fast the testimony of Jesus*, or to abide faithful to the doctrines which they had professed. Such were the persons whom the dragon determined to persecute.

The germ of the second catastrophe appears to lie in this closing declaration. It is that persecution which the dragon now determines to excite, which the writer is going to develop. Jerusalem and Palestine are no longer the theatre of his vision. He transfers us to the city of Rome, the metropolis of the whole empire. There the Caesars swayed the sceptre of the world; and bloody persecution, commenced in that city, would bid fair to exterminate the Christian religion. No wonder, then, that we find the dragon intent upon exciting such a persecution, and endeavouring to unite both the civil and religious powers of the heathen world against the disciples of Christ.

INTRODUCTION TO CHAP. XIII.

Such is the preparation for, or proem to, the second great catastrophe which the Apocalypse discloses to our view. We have already seen what discrepancy, and yet how much of concord, there is between both the plan and the execution of the first and second catastrophes of this august drama. The writer has exhibited in a remarkable way his power of invention, in making the plan of these acts so replete with variety, while he still preserves all that is necessary to a general unity and a regular development of the whole design. Persecutions by the Jews had been carried on so long, that they were everywhere known, and needed not to be particularly described. Hence the writer introduces them (chap. vi.) as being familiar to the mind of his readers; and he follows the subject thus introduced, until he brings it to a close. But at the time when the author wrote, Jewish persecutions were not the only persecutions that existed. Nero had recently kindled the fires which were consuming the church; and this he did with such unrelenting fury, that it seemed to be necessary to assign some special cause which should be adequate to account for such an atrocity. With great skill has the writer managed this part of his plan. He has scarcely alluded to Satan in developing the first catastrophe. Once or twice only does he introduce him, viz., in connection with the death of the

two witnesses, 11: 7, and perhaps as the leader of the locusts, 9: 11. We cannot well suppose, however, that the writer refrained from introducing Satanic agency into the first act, (if I may so speak), because he did not believe it had any place in the persecutions by the Jews. The Saviour had often accused them of being instigated by the devil, John 8: 37, 38, 44. Luke 22: 53. If we ask, then, why the author of the Apocalypse did not introduce Satanic agency into the first part of his plan, we may answer that he purposely reserved the introduction of this for the second part, either on account of variety, or for the sake of climax, or perhaps for both these reasons. The plot thickens as we go on, and becomes more intensely interesting, in proportion as more actors are introduced and the battle-ground becomes a wider field.

The book of Daniel (chap. vii—ix.) is particularly the model of the second part, in regard to the nature of the imagery employed. In Daniel, wild beasts of great power and ferocity are introduced as the symbols of kingdoms distinguished by their aggressive military forces. So here, the beast which rises out of the sea (13: 1), is a symbol of the Roman imperial and persecuting power; the beast which rises out of the earth (13: 11), is an emblem of the domination and persecution of the pagan priesthood or religious power; and these two united, with Satan at their head, use all their efforts to crush the church, wherever and whenever they can attack it.

Such are the formidable enemies with which Christianity has to contend. The manner in which the writer presents the controversy, or, in other words, the economy of the book in regard to the second great contest and catastrophe, as well as the nature of the imagery employed, have already been set before the reader in Vol. I. § 10, p. 185 seq., and need not to be repeated here. It is proper however to say, that the commentary in the sequel is based upon the economy as there developed; and in order that it should be understood fully, some good degree of familiarity with that economy is quite necessary.

One point of the highest importance, as it respects the plan and design of this second part of the Epopee before us, is the question: *Whether pagan or Christian Rome is the great object in view.* Which of these is the powerful and dangerous enemy to be overcome? This is, and has long been, the great arena or battle-ground of interpreters. My views in respect to this have already for substance been given in the Introduction, § 9, § 10, and particularly in § 12, § 13. I do not wish to repeat here what has there been said, in a variety of ways, and in relation to different objects. I will merely say, that as my main design is not a polemic one, I shall not enter at length into a discussion, the object of which would be to bring into view every minute particular. Only in the most summary manner do I design to lay before the reader here, in the first place, a brief sketch of the history of opinions among interpreters ancient and modern, in regard to what is symbolized by the beast which rises from the sea, and acts so conspicuous a part in the second portion of the Apocalypse. As everything in respect to the interpretations of the second part of the Apocalypse depends on settling this question, it becomes a matter of interest to know what others have thought and said in respect to it. In the second place, I shall, in the like summary manner, state my leading reasons for the views of interpretation which I feel compelled to adopt. The reader will then be in possession of material for making up his own judgment upon this matter.

Our *historic sketch* must occupy but a moderate space. Purposely I touch only upon some of its leading features.

Victorinus Petavionensis († 303), if we may trust to the Commentary still extant under his name, (Bib. Max. Vol. III. p. 414 seq.), confounds the seven trumpets of the first catastrophe with the seven vials of the second, (probably because of their similarity), and makes all relate to *Antichrist*, of whom he seems, for the most part, to form but a very indefinite and uncertain idea. "Whatever," says he, "is briefly said in respect to trumpets, is here fully said in respect to the vials. The *order* we are not to regard; for when the Holy Spirit sometimes hastens on to the end of time, he then goes back again to preceding periods, and supplies what is wanting. *Order* is not to be required in the Apocalypse, but intelligence," p. 419. D. Still he takes *Babylon* to mean *Rome* with its seven hills; and in connection with this, he appears, in commenting on Rev. xvii, to regard Nero as Antichrist. 'But Nero,' (so he supposes, according to the popular tradition of the day), 'will be raised from the dead, appear again at Rome, persecute the church once more, and finally be destroyed by the Messiah, coming in his glory and being accompanied by the prophet Elijah.' Hints of opinions not unlike to these, are also found in Hippolytus *De Antichristo*, and in many of the ancient Christian fathers; as we shall elsewhere see.

Andreas, bishop of Cesarea in Cappadocia, (fl. ad fin. Cent. V.), also regarded the beast which comes up from the sea as a symbol of *Antichrist;* and in the same way, as he testifies (Comm. 13: 1 and 13: 11), was it regarded by Methodius, Hippolytus, and other ancient writers. Andreas supposes the *dragon* to mean *Satan;* and the beast from the land, with two horns, to mean the false prophet who was to accompany Antichrist. The *Babylon* of chap. xiv—xvi, as he once suggests (on Rev. 16: 19), is *Jerusalem.* But in his Comm. on Rev. xvii—xix, *abit in omnia alia.* The beast in 17: 8, as he avers, is the *devil;* but in 17: 11 he is Antichrist. Babylon is now Jerusalem; then Babylon proper in the East; and, at another time, a general symbol of all persecuting cities. Nothing can exceed the confusion of his views, inasmuch as there is—according to him—an utter destitution of anything like a regular plan in the composition of the Apocalypse.

Arethas, a successor of Andreas in his bishopric, (fl. init. Cent. VI.), follows mostly in the steps of his predecessor. The beast from the sea is Antichrist; that from the land is his precursor (Comm. on chap. xiii.); Babylon now means the whole corrupt world, (on 14: 8); then it may be the literal Babylon with a secondary symbolical meaning, (ib); or finally, (Comm. on 16: 19), *Constantinople!* The seven heads (on 17: 9, 10) are seven monarchies, Ninive, Babylon, etc. The confusion of thought and interpretation is, in the main, of the same general character with that of Andreas.

Such are the specimens of very ancient interpretation, in respect to that portion of the Apocalypse which is before us. I may now briefly advert to some specimens of modern exegesis in regard to this difficult part of the Revelation.

Vitringa says, that the interpreters of his day, and those who had for some length of time preceded them, might be divided into two great classes, viz. those who maintained that *heathen* Rome is meant, and those who asserted that *papal antichristian* Rome is the object of the prophecy; Comm.

p. 570 seq. For *heathen* Rome were Alcassar and (with some peculiarities) Bossuet, leading Roman Catholic interpreters, who have been followed by most of the Romanists; and with these, in regard to the main point, Grotius and some other of the older and distinguished Protestant commentators have agreed. But Paraeus, Mede, Vitringa himself, Bengel, and after these the great body of protestant interpreters, specially in England, have found principally symbols of the *papal antichristian* Rome, in the second part of the Revelation. Thus this part of the book has been, for a long time, the arena of animated contest between the papal and protestant parties. Great diversities, indeed, as to the special application of various passages in Rev. xii—xix, have existed among individuals of both parties who fought under the same common standard; but a somewhat general line of separation has been drawn between the Protestants and the Romanists, by the application of chap. xiii—xix, on the part of Protestants, to modern *papal* Rome, and by the Romanists, to ancient *heathen* Rome.

At present, I will further remark only, that most of the commentators, both Catholics and Protestants, taking it for granted that John wrote the Apocalypse in the time of Domitian, have found of course the facts, (supposed to correspond to the predictions which are comprised in the second part of his work), in the history of Rome, either civil or ecclesiastical, subsequent to the time of Domitian, according to the theory which they embraced.

Thus much for the historic view. I come, *secondly*, to the leading general reasons for believing that *pagan* and *persecuting Rome* is the main enemy originally aimed at by the second part of the Apocalypse. In giving these I must be brief. I trust mainly to the developments made in the commentary on chap. xiii—xix, for the vindication of my exegesis, and the satisfaction of the reader.

(1) *The apparent object and tenor of the book plainly point us to this.* Present evils, present persecutions and dangers, called forth the book. It must be appropriate to the exigencies which called it forth. Chap. vi—xi, as we have seen, are plainly of this tenor. Why may we not expect analogy to this in the second part of John's work? What reason can be given, why John, living in the midst of the Neronic persecution, and writing a book whose main object was to comfort and encourage the persecuted, should have disregarded all the present wants and woes of the church, and looked forward only to distant future ages, and expended his strength upon endeavours to gratify curiosity by lifting up the veil which then hid them from the view of the church? I will not go so far as to aver, that no good could be expected from this; but we may safely conclude, that as the then present exigencies and distresses called forth the first part of his book, so they also did the second. I do not apprehend, that any portion of prophecy in the Old Testament or the New can be found, where the mere gratification of curiosity to pry into the distant future, is the direct or principal object of the writer. Something that pertains to encouragement or admonition, is always the object of the prophets. They were *preachers*, not mere soothsayers or diviners. In a word, Christians ready to despond, or tempted to apostatize, were to be quickened and confirmed and comforted; why then should John pass by all the horrors of their pressing calamities, and merely tell what would happen to the church more than a thousand years after they were dead? The question, put in this shape, can hardly fail of a uni-

form answer on the part of every considerate mind, which is unembarrassed by previous views in favour of some particular system of interpretation.

But I will not repeat what has elsewhere been said. I merely refer, once more, to § 9, § 12, § 13, of the Introduction, for more ample discussion.

(2) *To regard the second portion of the Apocalypse as descriptive of the papal hierarchy, in its primary and original design, would be against the general tenor of prophecy in the Old Testament and the New in respect to* DISTANT *future ages.*

All prophecies of this nature are elsewhere merely *generic.* Let the reader go back to § 2 of the Introduction, and peruse the sketch of the Messianic kingdom there developed. Let him peruse all the predictions of the distant future conversion of the Jews and Gentiles. Let him read Rev. xx. and onward, respecting the distant future of the church. All—all—is *generic* only. Why then should we depart from this analogy, and suppose a circumstantial history of the papacy to be comprised in Rev. xiii—xix.? Above all, why should we suppose this, when such a history is apparently inapposite to the writer's design, and could not answer the main end which he is striving to accomplish?

(3) *The characteristics of the beast and false prophet are such as constrain us to apply them to* HEATHEN *and* IDOLATROUS *worship, and not to degenerate Christianity.* Let the reader attentively consider Rev. 13: 5, 6, 12—17. If the beast from the sea means the *pope*, then who is the *false prophet* or second beast which comes from the land? Is it not plain, that the first is a *civil* power, and the second a *religious* one? But when was the civil power of the pope ever such as is here attributed to the beast from the sea? It can only be made such *constructively;* and then, only after a long series of popes had risen up and disappeared. But in the Apocalypse of John, the whole extent of the power of the first beast exists *antecedently* to the appearance of the second beast. It is only by a forced construction, therefore, that we can make out popery to be *idolatry* in the shape developed in Rev. xiii. Idolatry, in a qualified sense, I cannot doubt that a part of it indeed is. But the characters before us are no half-way idolaters. I know of no stronger description of idol-worship, of lying miracles in support of it, or of blasphemous assumptions and exhibitions such as the Roman emperors and priests made, than are here given of the beast and false prophet. To apply all these merely to popery, is at least a strained construction of the text, and must almost with certainty leave doubts in the minds of an unprejudiced and impartial inquirer.

(4) *The explanations given by the author himself, in chap.* xvii, *seems to settle this question almost beyond the reach of any well-grounded doubts.* It cannot be denied, that the object of the writer, in this chapter, is to lead his readers to a knowledge of what is designated by the beast which rises out of the sea. The meaning indicated by the symbol of the *second beast*, he seems to consider as being too obvious to need explanation. In fact it is definitely explained when this beast is named *false prophet*, Rev. 16: 13. 19: 20. 20: 10.

In chap. 17: 9, 10, he tells us that the *seven heads* of the beast symbolize *seven kings.* 'Of these *five have already fallen;* one now reigns, and the seventh which is to come, will reign but a short time.' Now how could five *popes* have already fallen at Rome, and the sixth be near the close of

his time at the period when John wrote, i. e. about A. D. 68? The efforts of Vitringa and others to apply this to the five forms of Roman government, viz. Kings, Consuls, Decemviri, military Tribunes, and Dictators, which had fallen before the time of John (Comm. p. 771 seq.), are altogether unsatisfactory. In fact, no tolerable solution of the words remain, if we apply them to popes. Nothing but absolute violence can make such an application.

Equally unsatisfactory is the application of the *ten horns* to the *papal* establishment. Everything degenerates, in this way, into mere fancy and conjecture. Nothing but the tributary, dependent, and subordinate provinces of the Roman empire, when at the height of its strength, and engaged in persecution, will answer in a tolerable manner to the language employed in Rev. 17: 12—17.

Are not, then, the circumstances of the times, the general tenor of prophecy, the characteristics of the beast and false prophet, and the explanations directly made by the writer of his own meaning, a sufficient clue to the interpretation? If they are not, it would be difficult to say, what the writer could have done which would be sufficient for such a purpose.

Finally, what other probable account, now, can be given of the length of the second part of the Apocalypse, unless it be, that present evils, or such as were at least very near at hand, were thrusting themselves upon the writer's view in such a manner that he must needs dwell upon them? Had Popery, as such, been the immediate object of his revelations, we might well expect he would have touched upon it with the same brevity that he has upon the Millennium, and the invasion by Gog and Magog. That he has not done so, is evidence that he had present and urgent evils more immediately in view.

These are my leading reasons for rejecting such a theory of exegesis, in respect to chap. xiii—xix, as has been followed by the mass of Protestant interpreters. I fully believe that popery is a gross corruption of Christianity, and that it will fall before the light of truth and reason; yet I do not think it to be the direct and original object in view by the writer of Rev. xiii—xix. But still, I apprehend that this, and all else that opposes Christianity, is *virtually* comprised in the Apocalypse. I do not think it was the definite purpose of the Apocalyptist that his book should be considered, in respect to its general tenor and meaning, as limited merely and only to the objects or occurrences which called it forth. The maxim: *Ex uno disce omnia*, is one which I should, in a qualified way, apply here with unhesitating confidence. The same Saviour, who has done so much for his church, and promised so much to it in ancient times, will not surely forsake it in later ones. What he did in the early centuries, will find a πλήρωσις in later ones. So often as enemies of its best interests and persecutors rise up, be they who they may, they will share the fate of those who have gone before them. The gates of hell will not—cannot—prevail against the church. The doom of all persecutors is inscribed on the face of the Apocalypse. The triumph of the church is written in characters equally legible. "Let him that readeth, understand." There is no time, no age, no heresy, no defection, no superstition, no malignant design, no active persecution, from Papists, Protestants, infidels, heathen, or others, either open or concealed, which is injurious to Christianity, but its doom (indirectly indeed

but certainly) is predicted and sealed in the Apocalypse. I consider the predictions here, in a certain sense as a model or prototype of all that is to befall the church, and that the issue and final end of all that opposes or injures true Christianity, may be found here. The book is indeed a lucid commentary on the sublime sentiment of Paul: *All things shall work together for good, to those who love God.*

In the same way we interpret the precepts and doctrines contained in the N. Testament. They were originally called forth by particular exigencies; but when once presented before the world, they are of efficacy for all times, and for all circumstances of the like character. What Paul said to the Corinthian Christians, for example, belongs to the church in all ages and places, so far as circumstances are the same. Of this great principle we make no serious question. And if so, why should it not be as readily admitted in respect to the Apocalypse? Is it not as important, that God should protect his church at one time, as at another? The motives which would lead him to do it in early ages, must lead him always to do it. Above all must this appear to be certain, when we look at the promises with which the Scriptures are filled, respecting the ultimate extent and glory of the church.

In such a sense, then, as that disclosed above, is every enemy to the church, whether Protestant, Papist, heathen, or infidel, spoken of in the Apocalypse. But this should have, and can have, no influence in the explanation of what was its first original and immediate meaning and design. My object, as an *interpreter* of the book, is principally to come at this. When this is once fairly understood, deductions from it of a practical nature, and of such a kind as I have now hinted, are easy and obvious, and may be made by every pious and well disciplined mind.

ECONOMY OF CHAP. XIII.

The great enemy of the church, who had persecuted it from the first, who had excited Herod to the infant-massacre at Bethlehem, had tempted the Saviour in the wilderness, had moved Judas Iscariot to betray him, and the Jews with Pontius Pilate and the Roman soldiers to crucify him, who had excited fierce and long continued persecutions in Judea, and after all had failed to crush the rising empire of the Prince of peace, has now been introduced upon the stage of future action, bitterly enraged by his repeated disappointments, and determined to begin anew, and in another quarter, his efforts to crush and to destroy. A more formidable contest, therefore, is to be expected, and the object of the chapter before us is to present a view of the allies with whom Satan forms a league in order to carry into execution his mischievous design.

By striking symbols, indicative of might, of cruelty, of impiety, of craftiness and grievous oppression, the *civil* and *sacerdotal* powers of the Roman empire, united against Christianity by a deadly hostility, are presented to our view. The first great adversary, who has already been brought upon the stage of action, is spiritual and invisible. He is "the prince of the power of the *air*." His confederates, however, are of *terrestrial* origin, and live and act in a visible manner among men. And inasmuch as the Roman empire comprised almost the whole

of the known world, when the Apocalypse was written, to represent its leading civil and sacerdotal power as leagued with Satan against Christianity, is to disclose a most terrific array against the yet feeble and infant church of Christ.

The writer spares nothing which may set forth the fearful power, and bitterness, and craft, and cruelty, of the adversaries to be encountered. The *civil* power of Rome is a monster emerging from the sea, with seven heads and ten horns. His frontlet exhibits a name which is blasphemous. His body is like that of a panther; his feet like those of a bear; his mouth resembles that of a lion. The dragon or Satan gives him all his power, and he claims divine attributes, and exacts religious homage. Christians, who refuse this homage, are persecuted by him with relentless fury. None but the truly faithful can abide a persecution so fierce; but they, whose names are written in the book of life, refuse to pay him religious homage.

Additional force, therefore, seems to be needed for the accomplishment of Satan's designs. The emperor of Rome, who was the commander in chief of all its forces, might indeed crush all active or visible opposition to his impious purposes. But a more extensive coöperation was needed, to root out the new religion, which was secretly and silently growing up, and bidding fair to flourish. The superstitious prejudices of the heathen at large must be roused up and excited to vigilant action, in order that not only the military and executive powers of Rome, but the energy of all its private citizens, might be combined against the religion of Christ.

Accordingly, in a vision, a second beast is brought before us. That he may be distinguished from the first, he rises up out of the land (v. 11), unfurnished with the symbols of great force and compulsive power, having horns only like those of a lamb, but speaking like a dragon, i. e. with cunning and craftiness. His aim is to coöperate with the designs of the first beast or civil power, in order to accomplish the intention to make that beast the object of idolatrous worship. By lying wonders and pretended miracles he operates on the minds of the mass of the people, so that they may unite in this worship; and whoever refuses to do this, is deprived of the common rights of citizens.

Thus is presented to the mind of the reader a most formidable combination against Christianity. The fearful question instinctively arises: How can it escape from enemies so powerful, subtle, and malignant as these?

No one who attentively peruses the Apocalypse, can fail to remark here, how much of the *climactic* there is in this second act of the great drama. In the first, persecution is introduced (chap. vi. vii.), without any explicit designation of the source from which it comes. It is only in the sequel that we are plainly taught this, by the designations of those who are to be punished on account of it. But here, the source of persecution is amply indicated; not indeed in respect to the allies of Satan in a *specific* manner, at first, but in a *generic* way. It is a mighty and seemingly irresistible civil power, in combination with a sacerdotal one which operates in a different way, that is presented. Hints or obscure intimations are indeed intermingled with this description, by which an intelligent reader, conversant with the manner of the O. Testament Scriptures, might easily conjecture who was meant. But a fuller explanation is reserved for a subsequent part of the book.

It may not be inapposite to remark, before we proceed to the interpretation of words, that here, as in all other like cases—e. g. in the parables of the N. Testament, in the theophanies of the O. Testament, and particularly in the books of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah—we are not to seek for important significancy in

every minute trait and individual circumstance which is presented to view. In every finely wrought picture, a great deal is inserted for the sake of verisimilitude, and to give the appearance of congruity and finish to the whole, which is not to be anxiously tortured into a symbol of some important action or occurrence. It is impossible to interpret parabolic and symbolic representations, in a reasonable manner, without adhering to a principle so just and obvious. And such being the case, we are not to push our inquiries anxiously into the *minutiae*, in the chapter before us, but to rest satisfied when we have attained to the leading traits and principal design of the author's representation.

THE FIRST BEAST: CHAP. XII. 18—XIII. 11.

(XII. 18) And I stood upon the sand [shore] of the sea.

In the twelfth chapter, the scene of action is the upper regions of the atmosphere, proximate to the middle heaven or welkin apparently expanded above us. Of course we must suppose the writer to have occupied a station, during the vision there related, which was appropriate to the purpose of inspection. In chap. 4: 1, he is represented as elevated to the heavenly world, in order that he may see what is going on there. In like manner, as he is now to see objects *terrestrial*, and actions done among men, he takes his station on *earth*. But why on the *sand* or *shore of the sea?* Plainly because the beast, which symbolizes the Roman persecuting power, rises up out of the sea. The station, then, of the seer is altogether appropriate.

Ἐστάθη, lit. *I was stationed*, (for ἐστησάμην would mean *I placed myself*), upon the sand, etc. The form of expression seems to refer to the action of the Spirit upon the prophet, to whom the disclosure is to be made; comp. Ezek. 3: 14. 8: 3. He was stationed, i. e. in vision, where the disclosure would be most convenient.—It is obvious that the division of chapters is wholly inappropriate here; for this verse belongs to chap. xiii.

(1) And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and upon the horns ten crowns, and on his heads names of blasphemy.

The word θηρίον, strictly considered, is a *diminutive* from θήρ; but in the N. Testament, and even in classical writers, it is often employed in the same sense as θήρ. Particularly is it usual in the Apocalypse, as we have before seen, to divest words in *-ίον* of their diminutive sense, e. g. βιβλίον, *book*, etc.; Gramm. § 86. *c.* 3. Note. Θήρ or θηρίον appropriately means *wild beast;* and in the passage before us it might well be rendered *monster*, for the sequel shows that this θηρίον is such. The custom of representing fierce, cruel, and powerful states, kingdoms or empires, by the symbol of wild beasts, was current among the Hebrews long before the time of John. Of the case before us, Dan. 7: 2 seq. is evidently the model. But while this may be truly said, yet there is no

slavish imitation. In Dan. 7: 2 seq., the lion, the bear, the panther, and a fourth animal, to which a name is not given, are the symbols of four successive monarchies or dynasties. In Dan. 8: 3 seq., the ram and the he-goat are also symbols employed in the same way. In like manner in 4 Ezra 11: 1, an eagle with twelve wings and three heads is represented as coming out of the sea; which is a symbol of the Roman empire. But in the Apocalypse we have only one monster, the symbol of the Romish heathen and persecuting power, who unites in himself several of the distinctive traits of the beasts named in Daniel; see v. 2. Of course, this falls in exactly with the design of John, whose object here was, to symbolize the power and the cruelty of that empire, or of that emperor who was then persecuting the church.

But why from the *sea?* Here the model is followed; for so is the representation in Dan. 7: 2 seq. But there, fierce winds agitate the ocean, and in high commotion it throws upon the land the monsters successively named. Why Daniel should choose this mode of representing their origin, can be accounted for in no other way so rationally as by the supposition, that the sea was regarded by the ancients as the appropriate place for the origin of huge and terrible monsters, such as leviathan, the תַּנִּין, etc. In the case before us, there seems to be a further reason for selecting the *sea* as the genetic element of the monster. Italy appears to rise out of the sea, like an island, and is in fact a kind of *peninsula.* Another purpose still the writer appears to have had in his mind. Satan comes from the *abyss,* or perhaps from the upper region of the air; the second beast (v. 11) comes from the *land;* and of course relative concinnity here demanded the *sea* as the place of origin. In this way the *whole earth* (sea and land) is pointed out as in combination against Christians; while the *prince of the power of the air* does all he can to augment their violence.

Having ten horns. A well known emblem of *power* is a horn, in all parts of the Scriptures. We might naturally suppose, at first, that *ten* horns must mean merely great or excessive power. And such a meaning this symbol has in Rev. 12: 3, where the dragon, i. e. Satan, is said also to have *seven heads and ten horns.* So in Rev. 5: 6, to the Lamb is ascribed *seven horns and seven eyes,* i. e. supreme power and omniscience. But in the book of Daniel, (7: 7, 20, 24), the ten horns assigned to the fourth beast are the symbols of so many kings (v. 24). In like manner here they are the symbols of kings, (see Rev. 17: 12); but of secondary and subordinate ones, such as were the kings tributary or allied to the Roman empire: *οἵτινες βασιλείαν οὔπω ἔλαβον, ἀλλ' ἐξουσίαν ὡς βασιλεῖς μίαν ὥραν λαμβάνουσι,* 17: 12.

The seven heads are, it seems, employed in a twofold sense; i. e. they symbolize either the seven hills on which Rome was built, q. d. the seat

of the beast, or else the seven emperors which had been reigning and would reign over the Roman empire; see Rev. 17: 9, 10. In Rev. 12: 3, the seven heads of Satan mean only his controlling power as the *god of this world*. But in the present case, the explicit interpretation in 17: 9, 10, prevents our giving to the symbol merely such an interpretation.

The diadems or *crowns upon the ten horns* seem designed to mark the *regal-state* of the subordinate kings; comp. Rev. 17: 12, 18, where both their regal-state and also their subordination are explicitly declared.

And on his heads the names of blasphemy. Some Codices read ὄνομα (sing.) here, which Ewald prefers; but the idea of the author seems to be that each head bore a frontlet, on which was inscribed a title, i. e. an honorary name for the emperors, that was *blasphemous*, q. d. a name which derogated from the honour and glory of the true God.

The source of the imagery here is probably to be sought for in the custom of persons, who held distinguished offices, having some engraved name, significant of office, rank, or duty, upon the frontlets of their mitres or diadems. In the Apocalypse the promise is repeatedly made, that faithful Christians shall be made *kings* and *priests* to God; and in Rev. 2: 17 is a promise that they shall have a diadem on which shall be engraved the ὄνομα ἀφώνητον of Jehovah and the Redeemer, i. e. they shall be furnished with a diadem such as kings and priests are wont to wear. If such a custom cannot be shown to have existed among the Roman emperors, it is at least certain that their *statues* had inscriptions on them, which gave appellations to the emperors that belong only to God.*

* An acquaintance with Roman history, will enable any one to understand why the writer speaks of the inscriptions on the heads of the beast as *blasphemous*. The fact that *divine* honours were paid to the Roman emperors, and specially after their death, is amply vouched for by history. Thus a temple and divine honours were decreed to Julius Caesar, by the Triumviri, Dio, 47. 18 (p. 337, edit. Leunclav.); which were confirmed by Augustus, Dio, 51. 20 (p. 459). Augustus himself permitted temples to be erected to Roma (as a goddess), and to his father, at Ephesus and Nice; to other Asiatic provinces he permitted the erection of temples to himself, in which divine honours were to be rendered him by the Romans who sojourned there. This was afterwards done, in honour of reigning emperors, not only in Grecian Asia, but in all the foreign provinces of the Roman empire. In Rome and Italy proper *temples* were not in early times permitted to be erected to emperors; but all divine honours were paid them, particularly after their death; Dio, ed. Leunclavii, p. 458. We find Virgil naming and worshipping Augustus as a god; Ec. I. 6—8. In the like way Horace, Ep. II. 1. 16; also Ovid, Fast. 1. 13. At Rome, after the death of Augustus, the senate decreed him a temple; and the like was done in many of the foreign provinces; Dio, p. 600. Caligula, in spite of usage to the contrary, ordered a temple to be built for himself at Rome, and sacred rites to be performed to him as to

(2) And the beast which I saw was like to a panther, and his feet as a bear's, and his mouth as a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave to him his power, and his throne, and great authority.

All the ferocious and powerful beasts which Daniel (7: 3 seq.) has *successively* brought upon the scene of action, as the representatives of

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a god; Dio, p. 643. Of the adulation and worship offered by senators and people to Nero, and accepted, the following is a fair specimen. Nero is returning from abroad, and he enters the city in a *triumphal* chariot, because he had been conqueror in the public games of Greece. Dio relates the words of the universal shout with which he was received: "Victories Olympic! Victories Pythian! Thou august, august! To Nero, the Hercules! To Nero, the Apollo! The only conqueror in the games of the Circus! *Εἷς ἀπ' αἰῶνος*, i. e. *the eternal One!* Thou august, august! Sacred voice! Happy those who hear thee!" Dio himself apologizes for relating such words, lest they may be deemed a disgrace to his history; p. 724. See also the like view of Nero's claims and honours, in Ascens. Is. ch. iv. Introd. p. 42.

It may not be improper to add, that on the leading standards of the Roman army, the likeness (*εἰκών*) of the reigning emperor was painted; and that the Roman soldiery were taught to regard this as the symbol of their tutelary god, who was present with them and would aid and protect them; see Modestius, De rei milit. Vocab. Thus Suetonius (Tib. 48) speaks of Tiberius as rewarding some Syrian legions, because they had not displayed the image of his rival, Sejanus, on their standards, and *had not worshipped* it, (non coluissent). Artabanus, king of the Parthians, who had been inimical to Tiberius, became reconciled to Caligula, and passing the Euphrates *adored* (adoravit) the Roman standards bearing the image of the Caesars; Suet. Calig. 14. When Pontius Pilate undertook to hoist the standard of Tiberius in the city of Jerusalem, knowing the obligation that would follow to pay homage to it, the Jews one and all remonstrated and offered their necks to the swords of his soldiers rather than submit to the erection of the standard; Joseph. Bell. Jud. II. 9. 2, 3. In Antiq XVIII. 8. 8, 9, Josephus mentions the claims of Caligula to divine honours among the Jews. He also states the claims of the same emperor, at Rome, to divine honours there; Ib. XIX. 1. 1. Even so late as the time of Constantine, his panegyrist Eumenius could venture to say of him: Ubique vim vestrae divinitatis esse, ubi vultus vestri, ubi *signa coluntur;* Panegyr. Const. 15. Under the comparatively mild and humane Trajan, we find Pliny, one of his Praefects, who felt himself obliged to condemn Christians under the then existing laws of Rome, writing to the emperor an account of the manner in which he ascertained that an accused person was not a Christian but a heathen. It was simply to 'compel him to call on the gods; then to offer frankincense and a libation of wine to the *image* of Trajan, accompanied by supplications; and lastly to utter maledictions against Christ;' Plinii Epist. 96. Lib. X. In other words; a true *heathen* was ready to do all this, and did do it, and none but a *Christian* would refuse to do it. We cannot well suppose that the conditions of escape from the heathen tribunals were milder than these, in the days of the monster Nero.

I need only to remark here, that from the character of the people at Ephesus, it is highly probable that the persecution of Christians and deification of Roman emperors were both urged on to great excess, in the time of John. The Ephesians as we have seen above, were among the first of all the provincial citizens in ask-

different empires, John has here combined in one monster. There is much of significancy in this. The Roman empire combined in itself all the elements of the terrible and the oppressive, which had existed in the aggregate in the other great empires that preceded it; its extension too was equal to them all united. Hence the propriety of the composite symbol which unites the symbols of other empires in that of Rome, and thus makes the complex unity of the latter a most significant index of power, and cruelty, and extent of imperial dominion.

Παρδάλει does not mean, as in our English version, *leopard*, but a much more powerful and ravenous beast, viz. the *panther;* which latter is the rival, and nearly the equal, of the lion.—*Ἄρκου* is a milder Alexandrine form of the common *ἄρκτου*. The strength of the *bear*, as to his feet and claws, is a characteristic too well known to need explanation.—*Στόμα λέοντος* designates a mouth of great capacity, or rather, one which has a large extent of opening, *rictus magnus*. In this idea is also to be included the formidable teeth which the lion's mouth exhibits. The three animals, thus combined by the writer, symbolize swiftness and ferocity in springing upon the prey, tenacity in holding it and dragging it away, and a ravenous appetite for devouring, with extraordinary powers adapted to satisfy it; like to what the Hebrews express by their אַרְיֵה טֹרֵף וְשֹׁאֵג וְאֵרֵב מַצִּיל.

Endowed with powers and a ferocity such as are implied by the description before us, no wonder that Satan, so discerning as to the most successful methods of doing mischief, should regard this beast as a ready and most efficient and hearty ally. Without scruple or delay he makes him his vicegerent among men, for the purpose of destroying Christianity. *He gives to him*, says John, *his power, and his throne, and great authority. Δύναμιν* means *strength, robur, ability* to accomplish anything.—*Θρόνος* means *regal power*, i. e. civil and military dominion or magistracy.—*Ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην* refers to widely extended authority. Satan is elsewhere called *the god of this world*, 2 Cor. 4: 4. His *ἐξουσία*, therefore, is in a sense universal; and so the authority of the beast, his vicegerent, becomes universal. What the writer means to say, is, that the power and dominion and authority of the beast were widely extended, like those of Satan. The intensity of the expression is manifest at

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ing leave of Augustus to build temples to [the goddess] Roma and to the emperor's father. How they regarded the worship of Diana, Luke has told us in Acts xix. It is more than probable, that in John's time, out of opposition to Christians and to court the favour of the Roman emperor, they carried even to the furthest extreme all the blasphemous claims of Nero, and demanded, as Pliny afterwards did, that Christians should utter *execrations* against Jesus Christ. With emphasis in his own mind John could doubtless well speak, to his fellow Christians and fellow-sufferers, of the *ὀνόματα βλασφημίας* on the heads of the beast.

first sight, and needs no elucidation. And the writer needs no apology for introducing such an incarnate demon as Nero, as one who was an agent "after Satan's own heart," and might readily be trusted as his vicegerent to carry on the war against Christianity.

(3) And [I saw] one of his heads as stricken unto death; and his deadly wound was healed. And the whole land wondered after the beast.

The corrected text omits *εἶδον* at the beginning of the verse. It is easy to supply it mentally, from the preceding context, and most probably it was so supplied by the writer himself; in which case the Acc. *μίαν* is readily accounted for. But without resorting to this, the use of the Acc. *absolute* may easily be defended by reference to the classics; see Gramm. § 115. 4, and Kühner, § 566. § 670.

What the writer aims at, in this verse, is a matter of more serious difficulty than the form of his language. In Rev. 17: 10, the *seven heads* are interpreted as meaning *seven kings*. The *beast itself* then is, when distinguished from them, the *imperial* or *supreme authority*, i. e. the genus, of which kings are representative and successive individualities. A part of the time, however, e. g. in chap. xvii, John employs *θηρίον* to designate the *individual emperor*, in whose hands the imperial power then was. But there is nothing strange in this. Imperial power was *successive*, and was held by different individuals. *Θηρίον* may therefore be a *generic* symbol, when brought into contrast with its individual parts, as here; but when the writer employs this symbol without any contrast, it may designate an individual who at any time possessed and wielded the imperial power; just as our English word *Majesty* or *Excellency* may have a generic or a specific and individual sense, according to the exigency of any passage.

One of the heads of the beast, then, is one of the seven kings or emperors of Rome; see 17: 10, 11. Which of these is characterized by the verse before us?

Bertholdt, who maintains (as I have done) that the Apocalypse was written near the close of Nero's reign, has an ingenious conjecture in regard to the passage before us. He begins the series of seven emperors with Julius Caesar, and refers *μίαν* to him as the *first* head. In justification of his version, he refers us to Rev. 9: 12 and John 20: 19. The whole verse he explains by saying: "Julius Caesar founded the monarchy; by his death it appeared to be destroyed; yet this did not happen, but after a while, to the astonishment of the whole world, Augustus reëstablished it." Thus the wound was healed. Berth. Einleit. IV. p. 1886.

The ingenuity of the solution must be admitted. The validity of the argument for it, however, is very questionable. (1) *Μία*, in such

a sense as Bertholdt claims, must naturally have the *article;* and so it has in both the passages to which he appeals. The instance in 1 Cor. 16: 2 (*κατὰ μίαν*) is no real exception, for this clause has a *distributive* meaning, viz. on each first day. But in Rev. 13: 3, *μίαν* has no article, and therefore cannot mean *the first* but only *one of.* (2) The *head,* as represented by the Apocalyptist, is *ὡς ἐσφαγμένην,* i. e. *seemingly* but not actually *killed.* The context shows that the beast survives the wound. But Julius Caesar did not survive his wounds; nor was he ever reported or believed to have done so. Different in some respects was the case of Nero. He did not indeed survive the wounds inflicted by the partizans of Galba; but, as we shall see, it was not only predicted but generally believed that he would survive, and would regain his former power. Whether, and in what manner, this may be applied to the text before us, will be a particular subject of examination in an *Excursus* (III.). But (3) It is conclusive against Bertholdt's opinion, that the beast now in question was a fierce persecutor of the Christian church; whereas Julius Caesar perished about a century before persecution began.

For further discussion of the question: *Who was the one head, that was apparently slain and yet seemed to be afterwards healed?* I must remit the reader, as intimated above, to Excursus III. near the close of this volume.

The whole land or *earth* means, of course, the great body of the Roman empire.—*Ἐθαύμασαν ὀπίσω τοῦ θηρίου* is plainly a *constructio pregnans,* i. e. *wondered at* [and followed] *after the beast.* In like manner Ewald says, the Hebrews express themselves; but I do not find his תָּמְהוּ אַחֲרָיו. The design of the writer is, to show the general extent of the divine honours paid to Nero, i. e. to the beast; for it is plain, that the beast is here taken in a specific or individual sense, i. e. for the then reigning persecutor.

(4) And they worshipped the dragon, because he gave authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying: Who is like to the beast? And who can make war with him?

And they worshipped the dragon. "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice," says Paul (1 Cor. 10: 20), "they sacrifice *to demons,* and not to God." The heathen, who numbered Nero with the gods and paid him divine honours, at the same time worshipped the gods who (in their view) bestowed such rank and authority upon him, and they offered thanksgiving for the honour thus done to him. This John names (and rightly) *the worshipping of Satan.* But that with this they joined the worship of the beast, is explicitly stated in the sequel.—*Who is like to the beast?* The Hebrew sacred writers often make a like challenge, in behalf of the honour and supremacy of the true God; see Is. 40: 18,

25. 46: 5, and comp. Ps. 35: 10. 113: 5. Of course John means to represent the worshippers of the beast here, as claiming the highest divine attributes and honours for the object of their worship.—*Who can wage war with him*, is a challenge designed to vindicate his omnipotence; i. e. it is as much as to say that he is irresistible.—*Πολεμεῖν μετά* is a Hebrew mode of expression = נִלְחַם עִם. The classics usually employ the Dative simply.

(5) And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given to him to do [his own will] forty and two months.

A description of Nero almost copied from that of Antiochus Epiphanes in the book of Daniel. Thus *the mouth speaking great things*, i. e. glorying, boasting, speaking haughtily of himself and contemptuously of others, as Antiochus did, Dan. 7: 8, 20. So too of blasphemies; comp. Dan. 7: 25. These things need no further illustration, as being characteristic of Nero.—So likewise the *ποιῆσαι* here without a complement expressed, has an exact parallel in Dan. 8: 12, 24, viz. וְעָשָׂה; which, however, finds a full and satisfactory explanation in Dan. 11: 36, וְעָשָׂה כִּרְצֹנוֹ. So in our text, either *τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ* is implied after *ποιῆσαι*, or else we must supply *πόλεμον* from v. 7.

Forty and two months. As the description of the beast already given is a close copy in many particulars of that described in Dan. 7: 25 seq. 8: 9 seq. 9: 21 seq. and 12: 7 seq., so also it is in respect to the *time* during which he was to lay waste the heritage of God. In Dan. 7: 25, the duration of the persecution is said to be *a time and times and the dividing of time*, i. e. three and a half years = forty-two months = 1260 days. Accordingly we find, in point of fact, that the time during which Antiochus profaned the temple and madly persecuted all pious Jews was, almost to a week or even a day, the measure here designated. So again, in Rev. 11: 2, the time during which the Romans are to tread down the holy city, (in this case the capital is, as usual in the Jewish Scriptures, the representative of the country), is said to be forty-two months = three and a half years. The active invasion of Judea continued almost exactly this length of time, being at the most only a few days more; so few that they need not, and would not, enter into a symbolical computation of time. The two witnesses in Apoc. 11: 3, prophesy during the same period; and finally the woman who fled into the wilderness, (the church in exile), is nurtured and sustained during the same period. How much reason there was for the writer to assign the same period of limitation for Nero's persecutions, we shall soon see. The persecution of Nero began in the middle of November, A. D. 64; Mosh. Comm. de Reb. Chr., § 64. De Vignoles, Dissert. de causa et initio. Persecut. Neron., in Masson's Hist. Critique,

VIII. p. 74 seq. It ended with the death of Nero, which took place on the 9th of June, A. D. 68; for Galba was proclaimed emperor on the 9th of June in the same year, and Nero was assassinated on the same day. Here then we have the three and a half years almost as exactly as in the case of Antiochus Epiphanes. It is not improbable, that Galba was on his march from Spain when the Apocalypse was written, so that the time of deliverance for the church was very near, when the annunciation in the verse before us was made.* See more ample discussion in Exc. V.

(6) And he opened his mouth for blasphemy against God—to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

That is, he blasphemed God, his dwelling place, and all in heaven who surrounded it.—*Εἰς βλασφημίαν = εἰς τὸ βλασφημῆσαι.—Πρὸς τὸν θεόν*, lit. *in respect to God*, or *towards God*, *πρός* denoting the *direction*

* 'But has the Apocalyptist no other persecution in view, excepting that of Nero?' I doubt not he has, in the sequel. But that which is most pressing and urgent, is that which first attracts his notice, and of which he first speaks. As the *beast* is sometimes *generic* and sometimes *specific*, so persecution may sometimes be adverted to in a generic way, and sometimes in a specific one. Here the beast is that beast which received the deadly wound and was healed, and which persecutes for three and a half years. All this is necessarily specific. The writer himself has pointed out this, by naming (v. 3) *one of the heads* as receiving the wound, and then in the sequel speaking of the *beast* as having received the wounds, v. 3, *ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ*.—V. 12, *οὗ . . . ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ*.—V. 14, *τῷ θηρίῳ ὃ ἔχει τὴν πληγήν*. The leading object of the writer of the Apocalypse is, beyond all reasonable doubt, to console Christians with the idea of the speedy termination of the persecution then raging. But while doing this, he not unfrequently casts his piercing eye into futurity, and sees the beast in various ways still waging war with the saints. By analogy he concludes, that the same end awaits all heathen persecutors, as awaits the present beast. In other words: God will vindicate his church, and will make it triumphant.

In a word; what is predicted here of the fall of the beast and his coadjutors then warring against the church, may be regarded in the same light as the precepts and doctrines which were called forth from the apostles by particular exigencies in the churches. Primarily they applied to those exigencies; but then they are capable of the like application down to the end of the world; for *manente rátione manet ipsa lex*. So in prophecy; if it belongs to the church of God that it should be *permanent*, if *esto perpetua* is truly inscribed upon its front, and all opposition must at last be useless and be frustrated, then does the picture drawn by John of the downfall of the Roman beast, whether then raging, or afterwards to rage, apply for substance to all future enemies, be they whom they may. I do not mean to say, that they are specifically, but only *virtually*, comprised in the Apocalypse; but I do believe, that their doom is foreshadowed by what John has said respecting the enemies and persecutors of Christianity. This is giving his work an ample range—an exalted significancy—instead of converting it into a mere syllabus of civil or ecclesiastical history.

of the blasphemy. Our English idiom is better preserved, by the version which I have given above.

To blaspheme his name. This was done by assuming the name and attributes of the true God. Nero was not only called *Divus*, but, as we have seen in Dio above, permitted himself to be publicly huzza'd as *εἷς ἀπ' αἰῶνος, the only Eternal One.* And when he permitted temples to be built for himself, as a god, he of course blasphemed the dwelling-place or *σκηνή* of the only living and true God. To equalize a creature with the Creator, or his dwelling-place with the eternal temple, is to blaspheme God and his dwelling-place.

Those dwelling in heaven means the *coelites* or inhabitants of the heavenly world, who are here conceived of as *σκηνοῦντες, pitching their tents*, i. e. dwelling, around the tent or tabernacle, הָאֹהֶל, of the Most High. Whether the *blasphemy* here attributed to the beast means *words* uttered against the *coelites*, or the degrading of them by representing his own idolatrous worshippers as occupying their rank and place, it might be somewhat difficult to determine. The manner of the blasphemy in the two preceding cases would seem most to favour this latter construction. The blasphemy seems to be that which is *acted*, rather than spoken. Yet both may be included.

(7) And it was given him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over every tribe and people and tongue and nation.

It was given him, i. e. he was allowed or permitted. Still this does not exhaust the meaning of the expression. The writer intends to intimate, that under a superintending Providence, and for ends which in their result would be important, the beast was allowed to persecute the church.—*To make war with the saints and to overcome them*, i. e. not only to persecute them but to overcome and destroy them; for destruction was of course a sequel of relentless war and victory.—*ἁγίων, saints*, a frequent designation of Christians in the N. Testament, derived from their being *consecrated* to God, and their consequent obligation to live in a holy manner.

And power was given him, repeated here in order to make a distinct impression of the power which was given to the beast.—*Over every tribe and people and tongue and nation*, i. e. over the whole world. This need not be *literally* understood; for it is a catachresis designed to express a very *wide extent* of dominion. For the distinction between the different words here employed, when closely defined, see Comm. on chap. V. 9. Ewald understands the clause here as designating *Christians* of all nations. This is a possible sense; but the other exegesis which makes the clause to be indicative of the extent of the beast's dominion, and therefore of his mighty power to crush, seems preferable.

The like phraseology, (taken from the book of Daniel, 3: 4. 4: 1. 6: 25), is frequent in the Apocalypse; see 5: 9. 10: 11. 11: 9. 14: 6. 17: 15.

(8) And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names are not written, from the foundation of the world, in the life-book of the Lamb which was slain.

The first part of the verse designates the wide extent of the idolatrous worship of the beast. All comply with the requisition to join in it, except true-hearted Christians, the elect of God.—*Τὸ ὄνομα* is used here generically, and is of the like force with *τὰ ὀνόματα.*—*Book of life,* see on 3: 5. This book is the Lamb's, because his followers are designated therein.—In the version, I have joined the last clause with *γέγραπται ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ,* because it seems to be connected with it in sense. Of the saints it is often said, that they were chosen before the foundation of the world; comp. Eph. 1: 4—13, and other like places. In accordance with this, their names are here said to be written in the book of life, at the same period. It is the writer's object here to characterize the *saints* who refuse to worship the beast; consequently we should attach the final clause of the verse to the preceding verb *γέγραπται.* I will not say, with Ewald, that if the clause be applied to *ἐσφαγμένου,* "inepta loqui faceres vatem;" for there could be no great difficulty in explaining the assertion thus interpreted as meaning, that God from the beginning of the world had purposed and determined that the Lamb should be slain; and what was thus determined by omnipotence and omniscience, might be spoken of by John as *done;* for the like is very common in the prophetic writings. But the exegesis that I have adopted, gives more point to the writer's intention here.

(9, 10) If any one hath an ear to hear, let him hear. If any one leadeth away into exile, he shall go away into exile; if any one slayeth with the sword, he must be slain with the sword.

The solemn warning here to listen attentively, (see on 2: 7), refers to what *follows,* rather than to that which precedes. Hence the ninth and tenth verses should be connected together; as they are in the version.—Literally *αἰχμαλωσίαν συνάγει* means *leads* or *conducts away an assemblage of exiles* = הִגְלָה גָלוּת. But as there is an evident paronomasia in *συνάγει* and *ὑπάγει,* I have imitated this in the version, without departing materially from the sense of the original.—There is in the whole passage a most palpable allusion to Nero; and it has more life and energy, when we suppose him to be still living. The writer foretells what must inevitably be the doom of such a tyrant. In fact, Nero exiled himself from Rome, and intended to make his escape into distant countries; but he was arrested in his retreat, and fell by his

own sword or by that of his assailants. Further confirmation of the view here given, may be derived from the next verse.

(11) Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

That is, there is room or demand here for both *patience* and *faith;* patience, under the persecuting hand of the tyrant; faith, to believe what is here promised in respect to his approaching doom. In 14: 12, the same sentiment is repeated, with the same meaning substantially as here. Ewald and others, who suppose Nero to have been already dead when this book was written, are obliged to refer vs. 9—11 to something that *will happen* at a more distant future period. But the whole is plainly more graphic and expressive, when understood as above explained.

THE SECOND BEAST: CHAP. XIII. 11—18.

We come now to the *second* beast, which constitutes the third and last member of the Trio that are combined against the church. While the enmity of this beast against Christianity is like to that of the first and second adversary, yet the developments of that enmity are plainly represented as being quite different in many respects from those of the preceding enemies. This third power, moreover, acts wholly in subordination to the second, and merely as an accessory or adjunct ally. By flattery, deceit, fraud, supposititious miracles, affectation of much zeal for the honour of religion, and the like, he endeavours to persuade, and if not to compel, all men to pay their religious homage to the first beast, whose power was so great and whose anger so terrible.

That the Apocalyptist means here not merely to designate another individual, or rather, another class of individuals, different in most of their prominent attributes from those symbolized by the first beast, cannot be reasonably doubted. In what the difference mainly consists, is clearly intimated by the appellation which he gives to the second beast, viz. *false prophet*, in Rev. 16: 13. 19: 20. 20: 11. IT IS THE HEATHEN, IDOLATROUS PRIESTHOOD, AND THEIR COADJUTORS, whom the author intends to characterize, by the paragraph now before us.

The disciples of Jesus wrought true miracles; the followers of the beast must imitate them in order to establish their claims. Hence by magical arts, slight of hand, and various devices, many and even wonderful miracles are represented as apparently wrought. Even one of the striking demonstrations of authority or a commission from above, the causing of fire to descend from heaven, is professedly and apparently accomplished by them. To compete with the true prophets of God before or in the view of the multitude, this seemed to be quite necessary; comp. 2 Kings 1: 10, 12. 1 Kings 18: 36—39. Luke 9: 54.

The author represents men as persuaded, by such exhibitions, to pay homage to the beast. They erect statues in honour of him as a god. These are even made to exhibit tokens of animation, to move and speak, in further confirmation of their claims to homage. This being accomplished, and with success, the crafty and malignant priesthood venture upon another and more extreme measure, in order to *compel* worship from the reluctant. On pain of being prohibited from purchasing the necessaries of life, and from making sale of any possessions with a view to sustenance or gain, all men are required to do homage to the idol

that has been set up. And that it may be known who are the willing and obedient worshippers of the beast, the mark of belonging to him is to be impressed on all; and he who has not this mark, is deprived of his civil rights and of the power to procure even the necessary means of life.

Whether John had reference in the paragraph before us, to some conspicuous and leading false prophet, who had been acting in the manner described in Asia Minor, it would be difficult to decide. It seems probable, however, that his aim was somewhat more general. He characterizes what was often, and in many places, done by the heathen prophets and priests; although it seems quite probable that the picture is drawn from the proceedings of heathen priests and prophets in the neighbourhood of those whom he addresses. Of all the places in the Roman empire, Ephesus and its neighbourhood seem to have been the most devoted to the rites and superstitions of heathenism; see Acts 19: 19, 24—34. They, as we have already seen above, were among the foremost in erecting temples and statues in honour of their Roman masters.

That in the fiercest ebullitions of a heathen spirit and of enmity to Christianity, some characteristic symbol of belonging to the worshippers of Nero may have been demanded of all, and impressed on the hand; and that something of the nature of that which is described in Rev. 13: 17, 18, may have been actually impressed; is by no means improbable, when we consider the custom of the ancients in regard to this matter, and the attachment of the multitude to mysteriously significant symbols. The affectation of mystery was almost a thing of course, in such a case. But it may be doubtful whether the identical number-letters (χξς) was the impression or cautery actually made; because the designation of this by John, in such a case, would seem to be too direct, and thus serve to aggravate the fury already existing against the Christian cause. It is enough that there was some symbol of such a nature impressed on the hands of heathen worshippers. The arithmetical *number* which John mystically expresses, is plainly designed principally to give a hint to his readers, who is meant by the beast which all were required to worship.

That at that period there were, in many countries, a great abundance of conjurors, magicians, and false prophets, and pretended workers of miracles, there can be no doubt. The story of Simon Magus, Acts 8: 9 seq.; of Elymas or Bar Jesus, Acts 13: 6 seq.; the declaration of the Saviour in Matt. 24: 24; the number of magical books mentioned in Acts 19: 19; the description given by Josephus of such characters in Antiq. XX. 8. 6. Bell. Jud. II. 13. 5; and the frequent descriptions in Tacitus, Suetonius, Dio, and other historians, of superstitions and of the worship of Roman emperors; all combine to illustrate and confirm the view, here given by John, of the efforts and intentions of the heathen priesthood.

(11) And I saw another beast ascending from the land, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

Ἐκ τῆς γῆς, *from the land*, for so it should be translated here, in contradistinction from ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης in v. 1 above. None of the terrestrial animals, at least none that were known to the ancients, could compare in point of magnitude with the monsters of the deep. For this reason, i. e. because the author meant that the second beast should be regarded as greatly inferior to the first in respect to *power*, and also for the sake of variety in the composition, the second beast is represented

as coming out of the *land*. Ewald suggests, that not improbably John had reference here to the false prophets in Asia Minor, rather than those beyond the sea; and therefore he mentions ἐκ τῆς γῆς. That John drew his picture from the character and demeanor of such, cannot well be doubted; for in this way his words would be much more intelligible and impressive to his readers.—*He had two horns like to a lamb;* the grammatical construction is peculiar, for ὅμοια is used as an adjective agreeing with κέρατα, and ὅμοια ἀρνίῳ = ὅμοια κέρασιν ἀρνίου. This mode of expression is styled *breviloquence*, rather than ellipsis; see Winer's Gramm. § 66. III. g, where may be found examples of the same nature, from Homer, Xenophon, and other parts of the N. Testament. *Two* horns, and not ten like the first beast, because his power is much less.—*Horns like a lamb*, and not those of a ram or of a he-goat (as in Daniel), or of some other fierce and powerful animal, e. g. the wild bull. Still, that *horns* are assigned to him, shows that some power is ascribed to him.

He spake as a dragon or *an old serpent;* i. e. he spake subtilely, craftily, deceitfully. Satan is called the *dragon*, because of his craftiness, guile, and fatal poison. Comp. Gen. 3: 1. 49: 17. 2 Cor. 11: 3. What the second beast lacked in respect to power and authority, he made up by wiles and corrupting influence. All these are employed in favour of the first beast. So the next verse:

(12) And all the power of the first beast he exerciseth before him; and he maketh the earth, and those who dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

The design is to show, that the first beast, having full confidence in the intentions and efforts of the second, delegates to the second, as exigencies may require, such authority as will be supreme, and adequate to carry his purposes into execution. This is plainly intimated in the clause ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, i. e. under his inspection or supervision, or perhaps it may mean, as his forerunner, as one who goes before him and prepares the way for him. But the former is the more probable sense. —*The earth and those who dwell therein* is a kind of pleonastic expression, after the manner of the Hebrews, designed to give emphasis or fulness to the idea of *universality* here; *omnes omnino per terram*, we might render it by paraphrase.

Ποιεῖ . . . ἵνα προσκυνήσωσι, a common mode of construction in the N. Testament Greek, specially in the Apocalypse, and not unfrequent in the classics; N. Test. Gramm. § 162. 3. Note 2. It stands for ποιεῖ . . . προσκυνεῖν, etc. By bringing the subject of the second verb twice into view, it seems to have been designed to put an emphasis upon it; ποιεῖ τὴν γῆν . . . ἵνα [αὐτὴ] προσκ. etc.—*Whose deadly wound was*

healed; see on v. 3 above. Here the object of the second beast's efforts is designated, viz. to bring men to the worship of the first beast, i. e. to gross idolatry—to the worship of a man as God.

(13) And he worketh great miracles, so that he even maketh fire to descend from the heaven to the earth in the sight of men.

It is hardly necessary to suggest here, that the author does not mean to state it as a *fact*, in his own opinion, that the false prophets *actually* wrought miracles; but that they pretended to do so, and gave out that they did so, and exhibited many surprising feats which made the populace believe that they actually did so. So Luke says of Simon Magus (Acts 8: 13), that *he believed;* John says, that "*many* [Jews] *believed* in Jesus name" (2: 23), in whom, as the next verse tells us, he had no confidence; Mark says, that Herod "heard John the Baptist *gladly* and did many things," (6: 20); the Saviour says of the stony-ground hearers (Matt. 13: 20), that they, "hear the word, and anon with joy receive it;" and the like is found in all parts of the Bible. It is the pretence of miracles—the claims that the false prophets make—which John here characterizes. And as to such pretences, the world is full of them down to the present moment. Every day things are performed by sleight-of-hand men, and professors of magic, and ventriloquists, and the like characters, which, among the ignorant, could easily be passed off for miracles of the highest kind. The historians of Greece and Rome give us an abundance of narrations touching events of such a nature. So far back as the days of Moses, it was found necessary to inflict capital punishment on impostors of this character; see Deut. 13: 1—5. Egypt was filled with them, Exod. 7: 8—13. Babylon was full of them, and also Philistia; Is. 2: 6. So was Ephesus and its neighborhood; Acts 19: 18, 19. Nothing could be more common, than magical arts and the performance of feats which would astonish and confound the populace. Hence not only σημεῖα, *miracles*, (for so we must translate here, because it is something *done, performed*), but μεγάλα, *great* miracles, i. e. great in the view of those who witnessed the performances of the conjurors. Lane, in his account of Modern Egypt, has related some things of this sort, which even now, with all the light of science beaming upon us, fill us with surprise; Vol. I. chap. XII. Exactly in accordance with the account which John here gives of the miracle-pretenders, is the history of Simon, Acts 9: 8 seq., where it is related, that the people of Samaria called him ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ μ ε γ ά λ η.

Ἵνα πῦρ ποιῇ κ. τ. λ. It can hardly be contended here, that ἵνα is *telic;* for what would be the sense in saying, that they do great miracles *in order that they may make fire to come down*, etc.? Plainly ἵνα here is equivalent to ὥστε, i. e. they not only do great miracles, but

even go so far as to call down fire from heaven. If any other sense is possible, yet, to say the least, it is not probable. It seems plain, that *ἵνα ecbatic*, which Tittmann has laboured with so much ability to illustrate and to prove, must be allowed here. As to the *facts* adverted to, it needs only to be remarked, that Elijah commanded fire from heaven, 2 Kings 1: 10, 12; comp. also 1 Kings 18: 36—39. Heathen prophets, who had any acquaintance with the O. Testament Scriptures, would naturally wish to appear as equals, as well as rivals, of the Hebrew prophets, in order to seduce Jews or Christians. If they could make fire to descend from the air, and devour those who denied their claims, it was adapted to strike all with terror. In what particular way they accomplished this, we do not know with certainty. But any one who has read the story of the *holy fire* at the church of the Sepulchre in Jerusalem, will be at no loss to imagine, that the accomplishment of such a thing, in the view of the populace, was not very difficult. A moderate skill in pyrotechnics could perform such a feat.—That *οὐρανοῦ* means the *air*, in this case, as well as in many others, scarcely needs to be noted.—*Ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀνθρώπων* means, *in the view* or *sight of men*, exposed to their gaze. What were the materials employed, we are unable now to say; but plain enough it is, that the whole affair was not at all beyond the reach of moderate skill in pyrotechny.

(14) And he deceiveth those who dwell on the earth, by the miracles which are given him to work before the beast, saying to those who dwell upon the earth, that they must make an image for the beast, which had the wound of the sword and revived.

The *deceiving* or *causing to err* is here ascribed to the force of the pretended miracles. These the false prophet is permitted to perform, in subserviency to the civil power or first beast—*ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ*, i. e. under his inspection or supervision. The first beast keeps his eye on the second, to see that all things are done for the accomplishment of his own particular ends. By the suasory power of miracles, the populace are prepared for the ulterior designs of the false prophet and his superior. The prophet tells the people, that there can be no longer any doubt as to the claims of the first beast to divine honours; that under him, and by his guidance and aid, he has wrought miracles; and the claim to a statue (*εἰκών*), and to divine homage, can no longer be refused. The wonderful character of the beast, viz. that he received a deadly wound and recovered—goes to establish the claims thus made. Nor is it material for the purpose of the second beast, that the first should have already been actually stricken, and apparently or according to vulgar belief had recovered. Any story of such a nature could not long be believed among the more intelligent at Ephesus, who must

speedily know whether Nero was again seated upon the throne or not, after the accession of Galba to imperial dignity. Enough, that these things had been *predicted* of Nero, and were extensively believed. More extensive, we may well suppose, would this belief be before his death, than after it. *After* it, facts would go to diminish the credit of the report. Nero, then, as the extraordinary person of whom such things had been predicted—this same Nero, the monster of the world, rightly demanded, as the priesthood averred, and was justly entitled to, divine honours and a statue in the temples among the other gods.

The miracles which were given him to perform means, such pretended miracles as a superintending Providence permitted or allowed the heathen conjurors and magicians to perform. What the writer intends to intimate is, that all this, mischievous and pernicious as it was, still did not happen without the notice or control of a Providence which governs the world, and holds in subjection even the enemies of the church; for they too are in the hands of God, and are at his disposal.

(15) And it was given him to impart vital spirit to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might both speak, and cause that so many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be slain.

Ἐδόθη αὐτῷ is repeated here for the sake of emphasis. The writer means that his readers should acknowledge the supreme control of the only living and true God, over evil as well as good beings.—Πνεῦμα, here plainly, as often elsewhere (see Rob. Lex.), means *vital spirit* or *animation*. In other words: the false prophets so contrived the statues of Nero, that the appearance of animation could be given to them, i. e. they could move the lips, and appear to speak. In all this there was but little difficulty. It was necessary only that the lips should be rendered a little moveable by some delicate and ingenious machinery within the statue, all of which was set in motion by some person in concealment. Easier still was it to supply the *voice;* as nothing but a concealed tube was necessary, through which some person behind the wall or curtain back of the statue, or beneath or above it, could say all that was requisite. While the lips of the statue were moving, and the voice actually came from its mouth, how could the stupid votary think otherwise than that it was *animated?* And besides all such contrivances, nothing was easier than to procure ventriloquists, who could speak for the statues, without its being in the power of the ordinary worshippers to detect the imposture.

And cause that so many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be slain. The manner in which this stands connected with the preceding clause, seems to indicate plainly, that from the mouth of the image such commands were given respecting those who refused homage,

as would of course subject them to excision. Not only enticement, falsehood, and wiles were employed in order to gain adherents to the worship of the beast, but *severity*, in case of repeated refusal, was enjoined through the device of making the image to vindicate its own claims.—As to the formula, *ποιήσῃ . . . ἵνα κ. τ. λ*, see under v. 12.

(16) And he maketh all, small and great, both the rich and the poor, both freemen and slaves, to put a mark upon their right hand, or upon their foreheads;

That is, he makes all men of every age, class, and station, to become worshippers of the beast, and to bear the token of being so, by having his name, or letters mystically expressing his name, impressed on their right hand, or upon their foreheads. Servants and soldiers were usually marked in this way; and here the servants or worshippers of the new god were enjoined to wear the token of their subjection to him; see on 7: 3.—*Ἵνα δῶσιν αὐτοῖς*, etc., a substitute for the Inf. mode, or else the 3d pers. plur. is used for the passive voice = *that a mark might be put upon them*, etc.; Gramm. § 174. Note 2.

(17) So that no one might be able to buy or sell, except he who hath the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

In other words: So that no one can enjoy the privileges of a citizen, or have any intercourse with the world either in the way of transacting business or of procuring the necessities of life, unless he still produces the voucher on the hand or forehead, which will entitle him to such privileges. This idol-worship becomes compulsory on pain of death.—*Or the number of his name*, is explained by the verse that follows. It means such letters as, when *numerically* reckoned, will amount to 666, and at the same time express the name, or surname, or title, of the person or character symbolized by the beast.

(18) Here is wisdom; let him who hath understanding compute the number of the beast; for it is a man's number, and its amount is 666.

As to *σοφία*, see in the Excursus (III.) connected with 13: 3 above. The writer means to intimate that *sagacity* is requisite in order successfully to make out the number in question. It is only he who has *νοῦν*, *intelligence*, who can properly perform this task. Yet it needs no supernatural skill. The *number* to be made out, is to be made out by the ordinary use of letters for numbers, such a use of them as is every day practised by men in respect to other matters; for such seems to be the meaning of *ἀριθμὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστί*. The number is to be computed *more humano*, not *more angelico* or *κατὰ τρόπον οὐράνιον*. For a discussion respecting the meaning of the *number* designated, see Exc. IV.

SYMBOLS OF VICTORY: CHAP. XIV.

[The combination of three such powerful enemies against Christianity, was in itself of fearful import. The world was at their command; while a few Christians apparently defenceless and helpless, were scattered here and there in the midst of their raging enemies. What could be reasonably expected but their extinction?

To animate the courage, however, of this noble little band, the writer arrests the progress of action in the great drama (if I may so speak), in order to hold out the *symbols of ultimate and certain victory.* The chapter before us is entirely occupied with these. In conformity with a usage frequently observable in this book, the symbols are repeated, although with variation in the manner. There is, however, a striking uniformity in some leading features of the writer's plan, in these cases. First, the Lamb appears on Mount Zion, surrounded by the 144,000 who had been sealed with his name, and saved from the desolations of the church's enemies in Palestine. The whole scene has reference not to the heavenly but to the *earthly* Zion, in the present case; see vs. 2 seq., which represent the song of victory as *coming down from heaven*, and the 144,000 as listening to it on earth. These are not presented to the eye of the seer, as *forces* to be employed against the beast and his coadjutors, as many have supposed, but only as *trophies* of victory already achieved, and therefore symbols of new victories still to be gained. The *contending* forces are presented in chap. 19: 14. The simple meaning is, that what has already been done, will again be performed; i. e. redemption having been applied to the 144,000, it may be applied to others in like circumstances. And what symbol could be more significant than the one here chosen?

It is no serious objection here, that the appearance of the 144,000 on the earthly mount Zion, is seemingly *premature.* It is true, indeed, that Jerusalem was not taken by the Romans, until something more than two years after the time when the Apocalypse was most probably written. This would, as I should readily concede, be an objection to the plan of the writer, in case the station there of the redeemed host of Hebrews were a simple *historical matter of fact.* But of course it is here a matter of mere *vision;* and as such it becomes exceedingly significant. It is as much as to say to John, and through him to the churches, that Christian Hebrews, faithful to the cause of Christ, would yet stand triumphant on their Zion, the sacred metropolis of God's newly chosen people. It is the same thing as to proclaim, that the Zion now occupied by the enemies and persecutors of the church is to be cleansed from all that is polluted and all that is hostile, and be prepared for a place of safe resort to all who love the Christian cause and remain faithful to it. All that is indicated by the vision, is spoken of, as is commonly the case in the prophetic writings, as something which has already taken place and is therefore a matter not to be doubted. On such a ground, there is no anachronism in the plan of the writer.

Moreover, that the 144,000 appear on mount Zion, has a special significancy. The metropolis of Judea has been the place where Christianity was most furiously assailed; there the *witnesses* were slain; and from that place Christians had been driven with hostile violence. Now they have, i. e. are to have, peaceful possession of it, and to hear and learn the song of triumph, while their enemies are no more. So (for this of course is the indication) will it be in respect to other

Christians, who are now contending with the beast and his coadjutors. How dear faithful Christians are to God, is shown by vs. 3, 4, inasmuch as the new song is sung on their account, and none but they can learn it. This *new* song doubtless means the song of victory and of praise for the redemption, achieved by a Saviour's power and by his blood. The sentiment is, that such, and such only, as had been or would be saved like those on mount Zion, could fully participate in the peculiar joys consequent upon a deliverance of this nature. Thus much for the first symbol of safety and victory.

The second consists of a triplex series of *proclamations*, by three angels in succession. The first proclaims the ultimate and certain spread of the gospel throughout the world, notwithstanding the present almost hopeless state of things, and warns Christians against yielding to the demands or threats of the beast; vs. 6, 7. The second proclaims the absolute and certain fall of mystical Babylon; v. 8. The third proclaims the awful punishment, which awaits the followers of the beast and all who comply with his demands, vs. 9—11; to which is added the promise of a glorious reward to Christians who persevere. Thus ends the second series of symbols.

The *third* symbol is constituted by a triplex series of *actions*. The Son of Man appears, throned on a bright cloud, and with a sharp instrument in his hand. An angel from the temple of God above comes forth, and beseeches him to cut down the harvest which is ripe, i. e. the enemies of the church whose wickedness is consummated. A second angel from the temple above also appears, armed with an instrument of excision ready for action. A third angel from the altar in heaven, who presides over the element of fire (the emblem of destruction), urges the second angel to thrust in his sharp instrument, and cut off the grapes which are ready for the harvest. This is done, and they are cast into the wine-press, and blood flows out to a great distance, reaching to the bridles of the horses.

Nothing can be plainer, than that the certain destruction of the beast and his worshippers is most significantly symbolized by all this. The *repetition* of symbols, in three distinct series, is adapted to make a deep impression. The specific variety in the second and third series is striking and agreeable to the reader; while the uniformity as to general arrangement is quite exact. Christ appears throughout at the head of all; and where angels appear, in each case there are *three* in succession. Plainly this arrangement could not have been a matter of mere accident, but of design. That the number *three* is employed in a similar way, in all parts of the book, needs, after all that has been said, no further illustration. The significancy of it in cases like the present, is beyond reasonable question.]

(1) And I looked, and behold the Lamb standing on mount Zion, and with him the 144,000, having his name and the name of his Father written upon their foreheads.

By comparing 7: 3 seq. with this, the reader will perceive at once that the same class of persons there mentioned are here introduced. But what is written upon their foreheads, is not there mentioned. Comp. 3: 12, where not only the name of God, but also of the new Jerusalem, is inscribed upon the conquering martyrs. Here the followers of the Lamb are appropriately described as having *his name* impressed upon them.—*Ἔχουσαι*, fem. plural, because it accords with *χιλιάδες*.—Ewald supposes the *heavenly* Zion to be meant in the present instance; to me, the sequel and the nature of the case make it appear quite differently.

Certainly the earthly Zion is here the most significant, and best adapted to what follows. Besides, it cannot be supposed that the 144,000 were yet all deceased. Their appearance is merely in vision, and for a symbolical purpose; not to show that they have passed to another world.

(2) And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of loud thunder; and the voice which I heard [was] as of harpers playing with their harps.

This shows that the *station* of John was now on *earth*, where also he sees the Lamb on mount Zion. It necessarily indicates a change of place from that designated in 12: 18; or it may be resolved by the consideration, that the Apocalyptist sees simply in prophetic ecstasy.—*Like the voice of many waters*, i. e. like the roaring of the waves of the sea. The comparison with loud thunder adds to the majesty of the scene.—Yet this was not mere shouting, or merely a tumultuous cry. It was like to the sweetness of symphonious harps. As to ὡς κιθαρῳδῶν, we must mentally supply the elliptical words thus, [ἦν] ὡς [φωνὴ]. Κιθαρῳδῶν designates those who accompany the harp with the voice. —Ἐν may be rendered here in a sense that it often has, viz. *with* or *by means of*. The idea of the original is, that the players united both voice and instruments.

(3) And they sing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song, except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

A new song here, as elsewhere, indicates a *new subject* or theme to which the song relates. In the present case, this seems to be a celebration of the victory and redemption of the 144,000; but as no one except these could learn it, the writer (who heard only the sound of the *music* but not the words) does not tell us what it was.—*Before the throne*, etc., i. e. in presence of the sacred Majesty of heaven, whose throne was supported by the four living creatures, and encircled by the elders; see chap. iv.—*And no one could learn the song*, i. e. no one who had not been thus redeemed, could enter fully into the feelings and sympathies of those who had. The wicked world cannot participate in the peculiar joys of the redeemed. And here, to the view of the prophet, the 144,000 are doubtless presented in vision as being what they would be, when they should have accomplished their probation, and as enjoying the presence of their Redeemer. But this need not imply that every one of them was actually deceased; for this is *vision, symbol*, not history.—*Redeemed* or *brought off from the earth*, i. e. from the vices and calamities of worldly men. Of course they no more belong to the world, but are separated and distinguished from it; comp. John 15: 19. 17: 9, 14. That γῆς here stands for *the world of men* is plain, because in v. 4 it is exchanged for ἀνθρώπων.

(4) These are they who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins; these are they who have followed the Lamb whithersoever he might go; these have been redeemed from men—first fruits to God and the Lamb.

Is the first clause to be understood *literally* or *figuratively*? If literally, then only one single virtue is here predicated of the redeemed in question, viz. that of chastity. But would not this be a singular eulogy, specially where the context says nothing of impurity, which is the opposite, and therefore there is nothing here to make it emphatic? I cannot help believing, therefore, that the *purity* in question here, is that which is so often the theme of eulogy in the O. Testament, and the want of which is so often the theme of condemnation; I mean, that the writer has an eye upon compliance with demands like those of the beast and false prophet, to practise idolatry and to believe in polytheism. *To go a whoring after other gods*, is an idea too common in the O. Testament, and too familiar, to need explanation. The 144,000, it is declared, have not so done—*they are redeemed from the earth, and from men*, and so they are of course to remain uncontaminated. The reader needs only to compare v. 8 below, to be satisfied that such must here be the meaning.—*Παρθένοι γάρ εἰσιν, for they are virgins;* the masc. form, as well as the fem., belongs to the later Greek, and to the Christian fathers; see Suidas, and Suicer Thes. So the later Hebrew and Syriac formed בְּתוּלִי, as well as בְּתוּלָה; comp. 2 Cor. 11: 2.*

Not only have they *kept themselves unspotted from the world*, but they have been devoted followers of the Lamb, *they have accompanied him*

* Neander (Apost. Kirche, II. p. 481) suggests difficulties and contradictions here in the writer of the Apocalypse, the force of which I do not feel. He says, that in 7: 4, the writer presents the 144,000 as the sum of believing *Jews;* that in 7: 9 a *countless* host of Christians of all nations are said to stand before the throne of God, and yet here again (chap. xiv.) the 144,000 are selected as Christians of a peculiar and superior order, and this because in particular they had lived in a state of celibacy. This he calls a *Widerspruch*, which has not yet been solved.—But what other solution does it need, than to study the plan of the writer? Persecution rages in Palestine; but Christians are there delivered from it when it becomes most bitter and dangerous, and the whole heavenly world rejoice in this; 7: 4, 9, etc. Here, in chap. xiv, those who had been thus rescued, are again presented to the eye of the prophet in vision, but merely as *symbols* of the deliverance that would speedily be extended to those persecuted by the beast. This is the amount of what John has said; and what is the *contradiction* in all this? As to the monkish idea of *celibacy*, as heightening the perfection of the redeemed in the view of the Apocalyptist, it is at least a stranger to the N. Testament; see Heb. 13: 4. 1 Cor. 7: 28. 1 Tim. 3: 2. 5: 14. Tit. 1: 6. I am aware that the Essenes were tinctured with some notions of this kind; but where is the evidence that early apostolic Christianity adopted them? Besides, how can we well doubt that *παρθένοι* is here to be understood in the tropical or moral sense? The defilement avoided is the *πορνεία* to which great Babylon invites, as described in v. 8; which seems so plain as hardly to admit of doubt.

whithersoever he might lead them, i. e. they have rushed into danger when duty called, and they have resisted all the allurements of the world to separate them from him. Unquestionably a ready and cheerful martyr-spirit in them is the basis of this eulogy.—*These have been redeemed from among men*, means the same as being *redeemed from the earth*, in v. 3.—*First fruits to God and the Lamb* = רֵאשִׁית, i. e. an offering peculiarly acceptable to God; comp. James 1: 18. The writer doubtless refers to the 144,000 as being among the earliest Christians, inasmuch as they belonged to Palestine where the gospel was first spread. It is not necessary, however, that the literal meaning should be pressed, viz. that which respects precedence in point of *time;* for it is evident that the *acceptableness* of the offering is the principal idea. As to the grammatical construction, *ἀπαρχή* is in apposition with *οὗτοι*.

(5) And in their mouth was found no falsehood, for they are blameless.

The falsehood here referred to is doubtless that of dissimulation or hypocrisy in matters of religion. The writer means to say, that they were truly what they professed to be, viz. the friends and servants of Christ. *True* to his cause they had remained, for their life had not belied their professions.—*ἄμωμοι γάρ εἰσι* gives the finishing stroke to the whole. They have lived without any just cause of reproach; but particularly as to the matter of defection from the Christian cause. In like manner those kings who never inclined to idolatry, among the ancient Jews, were said to be *perfect*, i. e. *ἄμωμοι* in regard to their highest allegiance.

(6) And I saw another angel flying in mid-air, having the everlasting gospel to preach among those who dwell on the earth, even among every nation and tribe and tongue and people.

Another angel must of course here mean a different one from some one or more implied or expressed in the preceding context. None are expressly mentioned, however, unless we go back to chap. xii. But the song from heaven (vs. 2, 3) appears to be sung, at least in part, by the *angelic* host. To this probably *ἄλλος ἄγγελος* refers, viz. an angel, different from those engaged in the heavenly choir.—*In mid-air*, the appropriate place for flying, and also for being heard by the seer. In Is. 6: 2 seq. the Seraphim are furnished with *wings*, because they are *swift to do the will of God;* so here, and throughout the Apocalypse.

The everlasting gospel, not the *book* of the gospels as some suppose; nor yet, as others maintain, merely the *joyful message* that the beast is about to be destroyed, (for how could this be called *ἀιώνιον*?) but charged with the *eternal truths* of the gospel, and to see that they are universally proclaimed. This simple meaning too, is the most apposite.

What is it which the beast and his adherents are leagued to accomplish? The answer is: To stop the progress of the gospel. What does this symbol of the angel, (having the gospel in charge and commissioned to see that it is proclaimed to all), teach in respect to the great contest already introduced? It teaches, in a most vivid manner, the complete success of evangelization, notwithstanding the powers of earth and hell are opposed. It shows, in a forcible way, the certain triumph of the Christian cause.—As to the Acc. *τοὺς καθημένους* after *εὐαγγελίσαι*, (if we adopt this simply, as some critics do, omitting *ἐπί* before it), this is not uncommon in the N. Testament; see Luke 3: 18. Acts 8: 25, 40. 14: 21. 16: 10. In Rev. 10: 7, the active voice (as here) is found; but in the older Greek this is uncommon, the Middle Voice being much more usual. But John supplies *ἐπί* before *τοὺς κατοικοῦντας*, and I have translated accordingly.

Καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶν ἔθνος . . . λαόν. The most natural construction here is to repeat mentally the verb *εὐαγγελίσαι*, and to render *ἐπί throughout, among.* The clause is a repetition of the preceding sentiment in another form, in order to give intensity to it.

(7) Saying with a loud voice: Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and the fountains of water.

The sense is *antithetic* here. Fear the true God and give glory to him as the Maker of all things; fear not the beast, ascribe no glory to him, honour him not as the maker of heaven and earth.—*Give glory to him* [God], *because the hour of his judgment has come*, i. e. to him ascribe honour, glory, and praise, for he vindicates the persecuted and oppressed, and will judge and punish their oppressors. He who made heaven, earth, the sea, and fountains of water, (comp. 8: 7—12), must be the Creator of all things, the only true God, and therefore he is worthy of all adoration and praise.

(8) And another second angel followed, saying: BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLEN—IS FALLEN; for of the inflammatory wine of her fornication hath she made all nations to drink.

Δεύτερος distinguishes the *ἄλλος ἄγγελος* here from that in v. 6.—*ἠκολούθησε* implies, of course, that this second angel, like the preceding one (v. 6), flew through the mid-air, where his message could be delivered with the greatest effect.—*Βαβυλών*, not literal but figurative, i. e. Rome. By a very easy trope, however, this exchange of signification is made. Babylon of old was the enemy of God's people, and persecuted and destroyed them. Babylon was then the metropolis of a most extensive empire, and itself an exceedingly great city. It was idolatrous and was noted for impiety; as the book of Daniel fully shows. On all

these accounts it might well represent Rome, specially Rome in Nero's day; and particularly so, when the writer of the Apocalyse, as we have already seen on several occasions, designed to speak of Rome in a somewhat concealed, rather than in an open manner.—*Μεγάλη* is a title strikingly applicable either to the real or the mystical Babylon.—*Ἔπεσε, ἔπεσε*, predicts with *certainty* the destiny which awaited the city, and of course, the dominion connected with it. Such is everywhere, and very often, the manner of the Hebrew prophets, when speaking of events yet to come. Here the very words of Is. 21: 9, respecting ancient Babylon, are quoted. Comp. also Jer. 50: 2. 51: 8. In chap. 17: 18, the development of what is meant by *Babylon* is made with sufficient plainness. It would be difficult to imagine how the writer could have chosen language more fraught with meaning than he has in the whole of this description.—But the reader need not suppose, that *fallen, fallen*, while it denotes absolute certainty, at the same time denotes complete and *instantaneous* excision. The predictions respecting ancient Babylon were fulfilled only in the lapse of several centuries; but they were at last fully accomplished. And so of the tropical Babylon. The Apocalypse itself gives sufficient intimation of a *gradual* fulfilment; comp. Rev. 16: 19—21 with 18: 4—8, 20—24 and 19: 11—21.

Of *the inflammatory wine of her fornications hath she made all nations to drink.* As usual with the Hebrews, the city is here symbolized by a *female;* see 17: 18, where this is plainly declared. This female is a heathen, practising idol-rites, and therefore, in the language of the Hebrews, committing fornication. Here she is represented as attracting lovers by the usual arts. She proffers to them heating, i. e. inebriating wine, for the purpose of exciting passion and leading to uncleanness.—*Θυμοῦ* does not here mean, as many suppose, *wrath, indignation*, for this would be directly opposed to the accomplishment of her design to *allure* wooers. It signifies *heat, inflammation* = חֲמָה. So, moreover, the original root of the word, *θύω*, would lead us to interpret it, for this is connected with the idea of *flaming up, blazing up, mounting up*, etc.; and hence, *θύω to sacrifice*, i. e. to burn on an altar the victim; see Passow's Lex. *θύω*. Hence *οἶνος θυμοῦ wine of inflammation*, i. e. inflammatory or inebriating wine. This is altogether in point, in the present connection.—*Τῆς πορνείας αὐτῆς*, a Gen. of qualification here, designed to show the object or purpose of the inflammatory wine. The meaning of the whole phrase is, that she gives such intoxicating wine as is adapted to lead those whom she allures to commit fornication. Of course, as *fornication* is here tropically employed to designate heathen and idolatrous rites and abominations, the general meaning is, that Rome employed all her arts, devices, excitements, and allurements, to bring all nations to the worship of the beast and his image—i. e. to pay divine

honours to the reigning prince as well as to other gods. On account of her activity in this wickedness, punishment is decreed; and this is here announced. Compare this verse with v. 4 above, and all seems to be plain in respect to that disputed verse.

(9) And another third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice: If any one worship the beast and his image, and receive a mark upon his forehead or upon his hand;

As was natural for the writer, he here follows the designation of the enticements, with a denunciation against all who are allured by them from the path of duty and fidelity to God.—*The beast and his image*, i. e. if any one pay divine honours to the impious king directly or indirectly, either to his person or to his representative or statue.—*Mark upon his forehead, or upon his hand;* see on 7: 3. Ἐπί before the Gen. in the first case, and before the Acc. in the second, without any assignable difference in respect to meaning. So, in some cases, in the Classics.

(10) The same shall drink of the wine of God's wrath, poured out undiluted in the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone before the holy angels and before the Lamb.

Καὶ αὐτός, *the very same*, *καί* adverbial and intensive.—*Πίεται*, Fut. Midd. from *πίνω*, in a neuter sense, employed as the act. voice. *Πίνω* belongs to the very few verbs *liquid*, which form a Fut. without σ and without the contraction *-οῦμαι*, i. e. without a regular form of Fut. I. or II., and which are declined like a Pres. tense; see Kühner, § 174. 2.—Ἐκ, partitive, *some of*.—*Θύμου* as before, but of course with a reference somewhat discrepant, inasmuch as *punishment* is here concerned, and not enticement to sin. We must go to the O. Testament for the full explanation. There God is often said to give the *cup of inflammation* or *indignation* to nations whom he is about to destroy; e. g. Is. 51: 17. Lam. 4: 21. Jer. 25: 15, 16. 49: 12. 51: 7. Ezek. 23: 31—34. Job 21: 20. Ps. 75: 8. Persons intoxicated are unable to destroy or even resist those who assail them; so that to represent them as intoxicated in the way of punishment, is to represent them as devoted to irremedial destruction. Or we may present the matter in another light. Criminals about to suffer, were often through compassion of executioners or bystanders presented with a stupefying potion, which would diminish their sensibility to pain, but which of course was the index or precursor of certain death. Thus in Mark 15: 23, it is recorded that Jesus refused to drink "the wine mingled with myrrh," which was proffered him when he was about to be nailed to the cross. The holy Saviour would not abate any portion of his agonies, by the use of an intox-

icating drink. But in whichever of these two ways the expression in our text is accounted for, the meaning remains substantially the same—for the drinking of such an intoxicating cup is the prelude to certain death. —*Κεκερασμένον* has here a *secondary* sense, viz. *poured out, propinated.* It denotes the act of pouring into the cup from which the condemned person is to drink, and thus has for its basis the original sense of the word *κεράννυμι, to mingle.* From the same word, with *α* privative, comes *ἀκράτης* = *ἀκεράτης, unmingled,* i. e. undiluted. There is a kind of *paronomasia* in the expression, as if we should say, *mingled unmingled,* where *mingled* would designate the *preparation* of the wine, and *unmingled* the *state* of the wine, viz. that it was undiluted. The universal custom among the ancients who were temperate, of diluting wine in order to drink it, is here tacitly referred to; for in the present case no such preparation is to be made, but the wine is administered in its full strength. Of course, intoxication and consequent destruction are the sequel.

The cup of his indignation means the cup which his indignation presents to offenders, or the cup which is the symbol of his indignation, or which accompanies the full development of his indignation. In this second case, *θύμου* is used in the sense of *heat* as developed by *anger;* as the nature of the case clearly shows. Such an *antanaclasis* is very common in the Scriptures. The contrast between the inflammatory wine of fornication, enticing to forbidden pleasure, and the intoxicating wine of a cup which is given to prepare for certain death, is sufficiently plain to every discerning reader.

Tormented with fire and brimstone is imagery borrowed originally from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. 19: 24. Mention of the punishment of the wicked by raining fire and brimstone upon them, occurs Ps. 11: 6. Is. 30: 33. Job 18: 15; elsewhere it is used only in the Apoc., 14: 10. 19: 20. 21: 8. *Unquenchable fire and the worm that dieth not,* are frequently joined in a like sense, at least for a like purpose; e. g. Is. 66: 24. Mark 9: 44—48. So in the Apocrypha, Sir. 7: 17. Judith 16: 17. At other times only the element of *fire* is named; e. g. Matt. 5: 12. 13: 42. 18: 9. 25: 41. 2 Pet. 3: 7. Jude 7. Rev. 20: 14. The book of Enoch abounds in the same imagery; e. g. 10: 9, 16. 53: 1—6. 89: 33—37. 99: 5, 7. 103: 5. 105: 21 seq. In 66: 6—14 the alternations of fire and extreme cold are mentioned, for the same purpose. The addition of *brimstone* to the imagery renders it exceedingly intense; for this not only makes the fire to rage with the greatest vehemence, but is noisome to the smell and suffocating to the breath. In connection with such imagery, it is easy to see how the ancients looked upon Tartarus or Gehenna as being in the under-world. The volcanic effluvia perpetually issuing from the earth, were demon-

strative that fires were continually burning beneath. Among them the popular *usus loquendi* placed the abodes of the wicked.

Before the holy angels and before the Lamb must refer the punishment in question to the future world. Ewald refers this to the simple *presence* or *looking* on of the Lamb and his followers; but the idiom seems to demand more. Rev. 13: 12, 14 shows, that concurrence, approbation, or that inspection which sees to the execution of any matter or thing, is intended. Exactly so in Is. 8: 4. That the blessed in heaven have cognizance of the wicked and their sufferings, seems to be plainly disclosed in Luke 16: 23—26. And the consciousness on the part of malignant persecutors in the world of woe, that those whom they had pursued unto death were looking down on their torments, from a state of inconceivable happiness above, would doubtless be a circumstance of great aggravation. But something more than this is intended by the text; as has been already declared.

(11) And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day and night, who worship the beast and his image, and if any one receive the mark of his name.

The perpetuity of hell-torments is explicitly asserted.—*Day and night* is a Hebraism meaning *continually*, without intermission, inasmuch as these include the whole of time. The last clause in the verse begins a new construction, which is left unfinished, as the mind of the reader will easily supply what is omitted, viz. *If any one receive*, etc., *he shall be tormented*, etc., as in the preceding clauses.

(12) Here is the patience of the saints, who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

The meaning is either thus: Here then, in the dreadful punishment of the wicked, every Christian may see of what avail his patience and obedient spirit and faith in Christ are; or, Here is a disclosure respecting the wicked, which is adapted to encourage a patient endurance of the evils of persecution, and a constancy in obedience to the divine commands and to the Christian faith. Ewald adopts the first method; I prefer the latter. As to the Nom. case, *οἱ τηροῦντες*, see on Rev. 1: 5, and N. Test. Gramm. § 97. 5. It is not at all uncommon, that an emphatic participle assumes the Nom., let the noun designating the agent be in whatever case it may.

(13) And I heard a voice from heaven, saying: Write; Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord, from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, so that they may rest from their toils; their works, moreover, do follow them.

In the preceding context, the third angel had been speaking, and proclaiming the threatened *punishment* of the worshippers of the beast.

Here very naturally an antithetic theme is introduced, viz. the reward of the faithful. Accordingly the proclamation of this is also made, for the encouragement of Christians; but it is made by a new solemnity. A voice from heaven, viz. the voice of God, or of the Saviour, proclaims the blessedness of the martyrs, and of all the faithful.

Write, i. e. commit to writing what I am about to say; a direction which falls in well with the supposition that has been already made (p. 207 above), that the Apocalypse was written in connection with the visions themselves.—*Blessed are the dead;* but who among all the dead are entitled to the happiness here promised? *Those who die in the Lord*, i. e. those who are by faith united to Christ, and die in that state of union to him. Doubtless the writer here had his mind specially upon martyrs.

Ἀπάρτι has given much trouble to critics. Eichhorn renders the phrase: *Qui ad hoc usque tempus mortui sunt*, against the plain sense of *ἀπάρτι*. Vitringa: *Ab hoc inde tempore pie defuncti quiescent*, thus joining *ἀπάρτι* with *ἵνα ἀπανσωνται*, and construing the latter as though it were a simple Fut., instead of a Subj. with *ἵνα*. But the intervention of *ναί*, (which for emphasis sake stands at the *beginning* of a sentence or clause), precludes this from being done in a direct way. That there is a reference in *ἀπάρτι* to the then existing state of things under the reign of the beast, seems to be plain. Violence and cruelty and slaughter were seen on every side. In circumstances such as these, the voice from heaven proclaims, that *ἀπάρτι*, i. e. from this time forth, until the beast shall cease to persecute or be destroyed, blessed, i. e. peculiarly blessed or happy are they, who, dying in the Lord and for his cause, escape the troubles and miseries of life, and obtain eternal rest from all their toils. In other words: To depart and be with Christ is far better than to remain in life, specially under circumstances such as were then present. Nor is this all the reward; *the works* which they have done in and for the cause of Christ, *follow them*, and are crowned with a glorious reward. Thus understood, there is of course a plain intimation of two things, viz., that persecution was then raging, and that it would still continue to do so for some time. On this account the Spirit proffers consolation. Let not sufferers be faint-hearted. Although deliverance of the church is not to be immediate, still, those who must yet be called to suffer, may well congratulate themselves; they leave a world of sorrow to enter upon a glorious reward. In this case, we may virtually connect *ἵνα ἀναπανσωνται* with *οἱ ἀποθνήσκοντες ἀπάρτι*, mentally repeated, i. e. Christians may die indeed hereafter, or still continue to die a violent death; but, dying in the Lord, they die so that they may enter upon their everlasting rest. Such are the prospects of the faithful followers of the Lamb, compared with those of the worshippers of the beast and his image.

The solemn *ναί* of the Spirit here gives an intensity to the declaration respecting the pious dead. The writer probably refers to the Spirit that spake within himself, he being *ἐν πνεύματι*, 1: 10.—*Μετ' αὐτῶν*, i. e. their works follow along with them to the other world.

(14) And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and on the cloud One sitting like to a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

Λευκή, *white*, means, as is usual in this book, *bright*, *splendid*, *dazzling*; see on 2: 17.—*Καθήμενον*, *one sitting*, without the article, as it should be, because the definiteness is not yet shown; comp. 4: 2, where the same expression occurs in the same way.—*Like a son of man*, i. e. having a human form; comp. the Messianic development in Dan. 7: 13, where the same expression is used. This similitude is not wont to be affirmed of angels although they not unfrequently assume the human form; in Gen 18: 2 such a form is implied.—*The sitting upon a cloud* agrees well with what is said of Christ when he comes to punish his enemies; comp. 1: 7, on which passage the writer here probably had his eye, as well as on that in Dan. 7: 13. Vitringa supposes that an *angel* is here meant; but plainly this is against the general analogy of the series of symbols here, and against the spirit also of what is predicated of the *καθήμενον*.—*The golden crown upon his head* betokens his dignity. *The sharp sickle*, his preparedness to execute vengeance upon the enemies of his church.

(15) And another angel came forth from the temple, crying with a loud voice to him who sat upon the cloud; Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the time to harvest is come, for the harvest of the earth is dry.

Ἄλλος, i. e. different from the angels before mentioned in the preceding series.—*From the temple*, i. e. from the temple or immediate presence of God above, and thus bearing the mandates or commission from heaven. If any difficulty arises in the mind of the reader, on the ground that such a command is directed to the Messiah, let him consult John 10: 18. 12: 49. 14: 31, and the numerous texts cited in the Comm. on Rev. 1: 1, and his difficulties must all vanish. Christ as *Redeemer* is subordinate; he is vice-gerent, not supreme king.

The imagery of a harvest fully ripe, and about to be cut down, is not novel. Joel 3: 13 exhibits the same. The *ripeness* of the harvest refers to the consummation of the wickedness of persecutors, so that the time for punishment must not be deferred.—*Τῆς γῆς* is to be taken here in its wider sense, inasmuch as the dominion of the beast was very extensive.

(16) And he who was sitting upon the cloud thrust in his sickle upon the the earth, and the earth was reaped.

No sooner is the command given, than it is executed.—*Ἔβαλεν* marks the action of *thrusting in* the sickle; *ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν*, the *extent* of the reaping, i. e. *over the earth.* One is constrained here to notice the resistless energy with which the action is consummated. No sooner does he, who had the sharp sickle, thrust it in, than *ἐθερίσθη ἡ γῆ.* What is here begun is consummated in the sequel. The additional symbols denote not only the certainty of the excision, but the entire *thoroughness* of it.

(17) And another angel came forth out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp pruning-knife.

Observe that in this series of symbols, the writer omits the *δεύτερος* and *τρίτος* inserted in the preceding series.—*From the temple*, i. e. having his immediate commission from God.—*Δρέπανον* means either a *sickle*, a *scythe*, or a *pruning-hook* by which vines were trimmed and the clusters of grapes cut off when they were ripe. The difference in the two cases presented in vs. 15, 17, demands a different version of the same word.

(18) And another angel came forth from the altar, having power over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp pruning-knife, saying: Thrust in thy sharp pruning-knife, and gather in the clusters of the vineyard of the earth; for the grapes thereof are ripe.

From the altar is more specific, and thus gives a somewhat different position from that of the preceding angels, or at least a variety in the mode of expression.—*Having power over the fire*, i. e. presiding over that element, or at least specially over the fire on the heavenly altar. That angels were regarded as presiding over the elements, is shown in Exc. I.; which see. Here the appearance of this particular angel is altogether appropriate. Fire is the usual emblem of *destruction.* The angel who has power over it, is here commissioned to give commandment for the excision of the enemies of God.—*Τρύγησον* from *τρυγή, ripe fruit, dried fruit*, etc., so that *τρύγησον* means to *gather in* or *harvest* such fruit.—*Ἤκμασαν*, lit. *attained their height*, and so primarily the word has respect to plants, etc., which attain their full growth upwards. But here it is figuratively applied to *grapes;* just as we might say of ripe clusters, *they have reached their acme*, i. e. their highest point of maturity.—The *plural αἱ σταφυλαί* refers to the collective mass of them; although the *singular* might be employed in a generic sense.

(19) And the angel thrust his pruning-knife into the earth, and harvested the vineyard-fruit of the earth, and he cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God.

Εἰς τὴν γῆν generically expresses the object on or toward which the

action of the δρέπανον was directed.—*Τὸν μέγαν* is here associated with *τὴν ληνόν* (fem.); but *ληνός* is both masc. and feminine. The most easy solution is to fill out the last phrase thus: *τὸν μέγαν ληνόν*; which was plainly at the writer's option, and probably in his mind.—*Ἄμπελον* here of course designates *the fruits of the vineyard*, for they only are cut off or gathered and cast into the wine-press.—*Τοῦ θύμου τοῦ θεοῦ* may be translated, *of an angry God;* for the first of two nouns thus connected, not unfrequently is employed as an adjective to qualify the other. *Anger* has reference here to the infliction of punishment, q. d. cast the grapes into the *torcular Dei punientis.* From the grapes thus cast into the press the juice is to be expressed, which is the symbol of blood to be shed; a natural symbol, on account of the *colour* of the juice, as well as the *pressure* necessary to obtain it.

(20) And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and there came forth blood from the wine-press up to the bridles of the horses, at the distance of a thousand and two hundred furlongs.

Grapes in the press were usually trodden by the feet of men; see Is. 63: 2, 3. Lam. 1: 15. Of course the press, for convenience' sake, was set up in the vineyard where the grapes grew, comp. Is. 5: 2; so that *ἔξωθεν πόλεως* means *in the country* or *field.* Here then the great battle is supposed to be fought, in order to win the city, i. e. the city of the beast.—*Αἷμα, blood*, so that the natural congruity of the imagery (juice, wine), is here dropped, and the thing signified by the juice of the grape is expressed, viz. BLOOD. *Up to the bridles of the horses*, i. e. of the horses employed in attacking those who defend the city. *Ἀπό* here designates *the distance from* the city; a use of the word which is frequent. —*Twelve hundred furlongs* = 150 miles, Ewald and some others suppose to have reference to the whole extent of Palestine. But what has Palestine to do with the present battle? The measure comes as near the *breadth of Italy* as it does to the length of Palestine; and why may we not suppose the former to be meant here, so that all will in this way be congruous? The *literal* meaning no experienced interpreter will demand, in a case like this; so that *to a great distance*, or *to a wide extent*, is all that can be well supposed to be meant. The reason for choosing the number 1200 may probably be found in the usually computed breadth of Italy.

Sentiment: The enemy shall be overthrown with dreadful slaughter.

THE SEVEN VIALS: CHAP. XV.

[The pledges and tokens of divine retribution being thus given, the execution of it is speedily to begin. The writer, when he saw the *σημεῖον* that follows, must be supposed to have had his place, in vision, in the heavenly world, (comp. 4: 1), although he does not expressly mention this. Yet that which he declares himself to have seen, of course implies all this. Seven angels are commissioned to go and inflict upon the beast and his coadjutors the seven *last plagues*, so-called *because the wrath of God is accomplished by them*, v. 1. No sooner is this command given, than the glorious host of martyrs around the throne of God, whose blood had been shed by the beast, sing the song of anticipative triumph, and praise the justice of God as about to be displayed in the overthrow of the beast.

The temple in heaven is then opened, and the seven angels, charged with the execution of divine justice, go forth from it in splendid apparel. One of the four living creatures which support the throne of God, gives each of them a vial or cruse filled with material to execute the wrath of God. The temple is immediately filled with smoke, arising from the fire which burns fiercely around the Almighty, as the emblem of his anger (comp. Ps. 18: 8), and also of his power to destroy. By reason of this, no one is able to enter into the temple; and, of course, no one is permitted to intercede for those who are about to be punished. Punishment, therefore, is certain and inevitable.]

(1) And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues, because by them the wrath of God is accomplished.

Σημεῖον, an extraordinary symbol, as the writer himself has declared. —*In heaven*, i. e. the scene lay in the upper world.—*Seven angels*, not *the* seven as in 8: 2, and therefore not the presence-angels of God.—Having *seven plagues which are the last*, for so the Greek seems to run, inasmuch as *πληγάς* has no article. The reason of the article here may be, that *ἐσχάτας* is like to an *ordinal*, which regularly demands the article; it is also emphatic. Ewald, who denies a catastrophe in chap. xi, says that *last* here means merely what completes the series already begun in chap. vi. viii. ix. But if we give to the word *last* such a meaning here, another difficulty rises up, which he does not seem to have foreseen. In the general march of the drama, the overthrow now before us is *not* the last. There is still another in the case of Gog and Magog, chap. xx. Besides, the writer here gives his own reason for saying *τὰς ἐσχάτας;* which is, that the wrath of God, *ἐτελέσθη*, lit. *has been accomplished* by them, (Aor. for Fut., in order to denote *certainty*, Gramm. § 136. 3. *d*). In other words, although the beast had been often smitten, and in various ways, now a consummation of his punishment is to take place. As to *ἐτελέσθη*, see the reference above, and comp. the use of the same word in the same tense and manner, in Rev. 10: 7.

As to the commission of *angels* here to execute the work of punishment, see in Exc. I. on the offices of Angels; also comp. 8: 2, where the seven *presence-angels* are commissioned to sound the woe-trumpets. The Redeemer himself appears at length, in order to close the terrific conflict, 19: 11 seq. But he here begins, and afterwards carries on, the contest by means of *ministering spirits;* comp. Heb. 1: 14.

Having the seven last plagues must, here and in v. 6, mean 'having a commission to inflict them;' for *the vials of the wrath of God*, which the angels are to pour out, are given to them at a subsequent period, see in v. 7.

(2) And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire—and those who came off conquerors from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing upon the sea of glass, having harps of God.

A sea of glass, i. e. a sea that was clear, pellucid, splendid. In 4: 6, this sea is said to be like chrystal; see the note there for full explanation. That which is here called *sea*, is the pavement of the court above, (*sea* in the sense of an extended level surface), in the midst of which the throne of God stands.—*Mingled with fire*, i. e. the tesselated pavement was composed in part, as it appeared on the present occasion, of stones having a *red* or *fiery* colour, as well as with those which were pellucid; which is indicative probably of the divine indignation that was about to burn against the persecutors of the church; for in Ex. 24: 10. Ezek. 1: 22, and also in Rev. 4: 6, no mention is made of the *red* colour. Fire is spoken of as *intermingled*, on the present occasion, because in this way it presents a symbol that Heaven is angry, i. e. is about to punish.

Νικῶντας ἐκ τοῦ θηρίου καὶ . . . αὐτοῦ, an elliptical expression, no doubt. Our English idiom comes very near to the sense: *Come off conquerors from the beast*, etc., and this idiom is very common. The Greek *νικῶντας* seems to be here a kind of *constructio praegnans*, for the idea of *σωζόμενοι* is implied, and *σωζ. ἐκ* would be a regular construction.—The expression, *from the beast*, naturally refers to the tyrant in person; *from his image*, to the statues of him in the temples.—*Standing on the sea of glass*, i. e. stationed around the throne of glory, which stood in the midst of that sea or smooth and level pavement.—*Having* or *holding harps of God*, i. e. such harps as are employed in praising God. These are speedily employed, in the present case.

(3) And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O King of nations!

Ἄιδουσι, historic Pres. for the Praeter.—*The song of Moses* most naturally relates to the triumphal song recorded in Ex. xv, sung after the deliverance of the Hebrews from the Egyptians; i. e. the martyrs

in heaven sung a song of anticipative triumph, holding it for certain that all which had been signified by symbols would be carried into execution. —*And the song of the Lamb*, i. e. the song which is sung to the Lamb, as the Captain of Salvation who is certain to triumph. Ewald chooses another way: 'The song which Moses and the Lamb had just sung in heaven, in view of triumph.' But where is the Lamb thus *associated* in worship with any created being? Such an interpretation revolts against the spirit of the Apocalypse.

Great and marvellous are thy works, i. e. thou hast done, and wilt do, things that require omnipotence in order to perform them, and so they are *great; marvellous* of course they must be, in the case supposed.— *Lord God Almighty* = יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת, so frequent in the O. Testament.—*Just and true are thy ways*, i. e. thy ways or dealings with the enemies of the church are in accordance with justice. They are *true*, i. e. they are in accordance with thy promises, and show that thou hast spoken nothing but truth, as it respects the protection of the church, or the destruction of its enemies.—*King of nations!* So the emended text —better than the text. recept., which reads *ἁγίων*; for here the view before the writer's mind has respect to nations at large.

(4) Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou alone art holy. Truly all nations shall come and worship before thee, because thy righteous judgments have been made manifest.

Φοβηθῇ seems here rather to indicate *fear* than reverence, because it is coupled with considerations that respect punishment.—*Glorify thy name*, i. e. give glory to thee on account of what thou hast done.—*For thou alone art holy*, where *ὅσιος* seems = קָדוֹשׁ, i. e. an object of reverence.—*Ὅτι, surely* all nations, etc. That כִּי in Hebrew, at the beginning of a clause or sentence, sometimes has virtually such a meaning, is well known. It is a *constructio praegnans* = יְהִי כִי. This idiom, if admitted here, makes the connection and meaning of *ὅτι* simple and plain. But if the reader chooses another way, he may come to the same sense by a *λέγω ὅτι* or an *οἶδα ὅτι*. There is still another way; i. e. *ὅτι* may be regarded here as standing before a second reason for *fearing God*. The first reason is that he is *ἅγιος*; the second, that he is the object of worship or fear for all nations, *because of his righteous judgments that have been manifested*. *Δικαιώματα* designates the exhibitions of punitive justice here, or at least, the decree that it shall be executed.

(5) And after this I beheld, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened.

The triumphal song being finished, forthwith the action of the piece proceeds. *The temple*, not the whole *ναός*, but only that part which be-

longs *to the tabernacle of testimony*, viz. where the testimony of God, i. e. his covenant and his commandments, is kept; of course the *Sanctum Sanctorum*. Why *opened?* In order that his glory may be seen, and the revelation which he is about to make of himself may strike all with wonder.—The expression *in heaven* shows, that the temple above is here meant.

(6) And there went forth the seven angels, who had the seven last plagues, from the temple, clothed with pure, splendid linen, and girt about the breasts with golden girdles.

Mark here the intensity of the description. Angels who are permitted, like the high priests of old, to enter the most Holy Place, are commissioned to the work now to be done; for it is from the *ναὸς of the testimony* that they come. Their vestments are like to those of the priests; comp. Ex. 28: 27, 29. Lev. 16: 4. As to the *girdles*, comp. Ex. 28: 39, 40. The Acc. after both the participles here is a usual construction; Gramm. § 104. 2. *a*. The splendour of the array is manifest.

(7) And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden vials, filled with the wrath of God who liveth forever and ever.

The living creatures support the throne of God (4: 6), and are therefore nearest to him. Not only are the messengers of wrath sent from the holy of holies, but the vials of indignation come from the throne itself, or rather, from him who sits upon it.—*Golden vials*, like the golden vessels in the temple below.—*Filled with the wrath of God*, filled with something which is emblematic of his wrath, and which is to be poured out upon the beast and his followers. The imagery seems to be kindred to that of the inflammatory cup, given to intoxicate before destruction; see on Rev. 14: 10. In the sequel, these vials appear to be employed both as symbols and as means of punishment.—*Of God who liveth forever and ever*, i. e. of the eternal and unchangeable God. The attribute here ascribed to God renders the colouring intense.

(8) And the temple was filled with smoke, by reason of the glory of God and by reason of his power; and no one could enter into the temple, until the seven plagues of the seven angels were accomplished.

Glory of God here means the exceeding brightness or splendour supposed to be about him, when he appears in the midst of fire, as on Sinai of old. So he is represented here; and so the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Our God is a consuming fire," Heb. 12: 29. The meaning is, that he is so to the wicked. On the like ground is he here presented as surrounded by fire excessively bright. From this issues the *smoke* mentioned, as also on Sinai, comp. Ps. 18: 8. Two purposes seem to be answered by this imagery; the first is, that the smoke ex-

cluded all intercessors from the house or temple; comp. 2 Chron. 5: 13, 14. In other words, no remission is to be shown in the exhibition of vindictive justice upon the beast. The second is, that inasmuch as the veiling of himself in clouds of darkness is often predicated of God, (see Ex. 19: 18 seq. Ps. 18: 8, seq. Is. 6: 4, etc.) so we may regard the mysterious majesty of the Godhead as symbolized by imagery such as that before us. The plagues, also, must be all *completed*, before the Vindicator of his church will relinquish the attitude thus described; for no one can enter the temple to intercede ἄχρι τελεσθῶσι, i. e. until they are completed.

THE SEVEN VIALS: CHAP. XVI.

[All is now ready to begin the attack. Vengeance no longer sleeps. The seven angels are bidden to go and pour out the vials of wrath upon the kingdom of the beast. The succession of plagues inflicted by them greatly resemble those under the trumpets, in chap. viii. There, the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains of waters, and then the heavens above, are smitten. Here, men on the earth, then the sea, the rivers and fountains of water, and the heavens, are smitten. There is of course some variation in the manner of describing all this; but there are also many traits of mutual resemblance.—The three woe-trumpets (chap. ix. seq.) are indicative of great torments to men by the locusts; of immense slaughter by horsemen; and finally of thunder, lightning, tempest, and earthquake, which destroy the metropolis. Here the fifth vial affects the throne of the beast, i. e. his capital; the sixth brings in an overwhelming foreign enemy; the seventh is poured upon the air, the residence of the dragon; and then thunder, etc., as before, conclude the first onset upon the capital of the beast. The *similarity* of plan in the two cases it is impossible to overlook; and yet the diversity in the execution is very considerable, so much so that the author cannot be justly accused of copying from himself.

The *similarity* in question makes much against the supposition of Ewald, that there is no catastrophe related in chap xi. If the whole were one piece, and everything related to one and the same enemy of the church, is it probable that John would have indulged in so much similarity here? At least, to my own mind this seems to be highly improbable. But when different enemies are involved in like destruction, and for the same cause, i. e. persecution, it is not to be wondered at, that the writer has drawn their respective pictures with some traits that are common to both.

Some of the *dissimilitudes*, however, between the two pictures seem to demand more particular notice and consideration than has usually been given to them. In the first catastrophe there are *two* series of sevens, viz. the seven *seals*, and the seven *trumpets;* the last growing out of the protracted execution of the judgments symbolized by the seventh seal. In the second catastrophe, there is only one series of seven, viz. that of seven vials. In the first catastrophe, amidst all the preparations for destruction, and amidst the judgments inflicted, there is no actual destruction of human life until we come to the third trumpet, which renders bitter and poisonous the rivers and fountains, in consequence of which many die, 8: 11. The fourth and fifth trumpets again are symbols of annoyances only; the sixth recommences the work of destruction, by horsemen (9: 15), and by earth-

quake (11: 15). The seventh and last *destroys those who have laid waste the land*, 11: 18. In the second catastrophe, all is a succession of annoyances. But under the sixth vial, the beast and all his coadjutors are gathered into an immense army, and brought to Armageddon, that in due time they may be attacked and slaughtered there, 16: 13—16, comp. 19: 19—21. The seventh vial occasions thunder, lightning, tempest, hail, and earthquake, by which great Babylon and all her tributary cities are reduced to a ruinous state, and the final triumph of the antagonist-power is anticipated with certainty. It is the *acme* of victory, but not the *completing* of subjugation and destruction. This last work goes *gradually* on, until it is finished at last by the "King of kings and Lord of lords" himself, at the head of his victorious army, 19: 11—21.

Thus has the author of the book answered the demand of aesthetics for *variety* in his composition. But he has accomplished, at the same time, a much more important work. He has given a sketch which corresponds, with a good degree of exactness, to the state of facts. The persecuting power of the unbelieving Jews ceased in the main with the destruction of Jerusalem. Hence the tempest and earthquake which lay that place in ruins, are the *finale* of the first catastrophe. But not so with the second. The death of Nero was indeed the destruction of the beast, for the time being, and it made a temporary end of persecution. But the beast still came up again from the pit; the contest was renewed, and, with many remissions, continued down to the time of Constantine. Rome, as heathen, then finally ceased to persecute. The beast was finally slain.

In accordance with these historical facts, we must not fail to notice how faithfully drawn the picture before us is. The seventh vial paralyzes the power of the beast, i. e. persecution is arrested when Nero dies. But great Babylon is not yet *extinct*, although in a ruinous state. The empire is wide, and the shaking of the capital and the chief cities does not destroy the whole. Hence the subsequent proclamation in chap. xviii. of *final* extinction, and the picture of the mourners, when this shall take place. It is only in the course of time (which is not limited), when the Redeemer himself shall come at the head of his victorious army, that the *final* extinction of the power of the beast takes place. And all this, we should not fail to note, is in accordance with the fate of *ancient* Babylon. Her ruin was foretold in Is. xiii. xiv. It is there predicted, that "her time is near to come, and that her days shall not be prolonged," 13: 22. Yet it was at least *seven centuries*, before this was fully and entirely accomplished. But the *main* work, the capture of the city, was speedily done. Her fall commenced with this capture, and she continued to fall until at last she reached the bottom of the gulf of destruction. So with spiritual Babylon. The pledge, the symbol, or rather the commencement itself, of the final fall of the beast, began with the death of Nero, and the consequent cessation of persecution. Christianity, then in but an infant state, soon attained too much manhood and strength to be vanquished. Often was it attacked and greatly annoyed; but "the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church." The gates of hell could not prevail against it.

Whoever now, instead of looking abroad and suffering his imagination to wander to the ends of the earth for correspondencies, will simply examine the interior of this book, the concinnity of its plan, its obvious and evident adaptedness to the state of things then existing, its resemblances to the ancient prophecies, and above all the *object* of the writer; whoever, I say, will take the latter course, will find more regularity and continuity of design and structure in the Apocalypse, than in any other book of the Bible. How can it be, that the *object* of the writer should lie so conspicuously on the very face of his book throughout, and yet this

object have been so often overlooked or mistaken? His design is to administer consolation to the persecuted church. But how could this be accomplished by merely presenting a syllabus of civil history, or a view of the heresies in the church that would spring up in future ages? Was this matter of *consolation*? And what *moral* purposes could a syllabus of the civil and heretical history of future periods subserve? But when we view the author as opening before the oppressed disciples of his master, the certain prospects of deliverance for the church, yea of ultimate and universal triumph throughout the world; and what is still more, when we view him as withdrawing the veil which separates eternity from our view, and disclosing to our astonished and dazzled vision the glories of the New Jerusalem, the final abode of the faithful, and the preëminence of martyrs there; —the congruity, the beauty, the adaptedness to then existing circumstances, the overpowering persuasiveness and moral excitement of such a picture, are enough to force us to consider it as coming from a hand that was guided by more than human skill, and which has executed what has never been surpassed or even rivalled.]

(1) And I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels: Go, and pour out the seven vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

From the temple, i. e. from God, or the Messiah, who dwells in the temple above. This is not the only passage where the *ὄνομα ἀφώνητον* is omitted; comp. 6: 6. 9: 13. 16: 17. 18: 4. 19: 5. No doubt the sublimity of the description is augmented in this way.—*Ἐκχέατε*, Imp. Aor. for the verb *χέω* makes an irreg. Fut. *χέω*, and Aor. I. *ἔχεα*, Küh. § 137.

(2) And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth, and there was a grievous and annoying ulcer upon men who had the mark of the beast, and who worshipped his image.

For the nature of the ulcer here mentioned, comp. Deut. 28: 27, 35. The whole of this first plague corresponds with that described in Ex. 9: 8—11, as inflicted upon the Egyptians. Thus the punishment commences with loathsome disease.

(3) And the second [angel] poured out his vial into the sea, and it became like the blood of a dead man, and every living creature in the sea died.

Here is the same image for substance, as is presented in Rev. 8: 8 and Ex. 7: 20—25. But the means by which the change to blood is wrought, are quite diverse from those in 8: 8. Yet the effect is the same; and so in Ex. 7: 21.—*Αἷμα ὡς νεκροῦ*, either very bloody, like a mangled corpse, or else, coloured as it were with the dark and almost black blood of a dead man.—*Ψευχὴ ζωῆς* = נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה, Gen. 1: 20, 30, *living creature*, for *every soul of life* must of course mean everything which possessed life.—The annoyance which this would occasion to men is obvious. A *literal* fulfilment is not to be sought after. Sentiment of verses 2 and 3: 'The enemies of the church shall be annoyed on the land and on the sea, i. e. everywhere.'

(4) And the third [angel] poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of water, and they became blood.

In 8: 10, 11, a star or comet is said to fall upon the third part of the rivers and fountains, and they become bitter and poisonous. Here the imagery is varied. All the waters that are drinkable become *blood;* which, as the sequel shows, is designed to be the punishment of persecutors who must drink it, and the symbol of their guilt and doom.—*Ἐγένετο*, i. e. *τὰ ὕδατα ἐγένετο.*

(5, 6) And I heard the angel of the waters saying: Righteous art thou, who art and wast; holy [art thou] because thou hast thus judged! For the blood of saints and prophets have they shed, and blood hast thou given them to drink. They deserve it!

So I divide the clauses in the first part of the verse, for so the sense appears to demand. To join them thus: *Thou art and wast holy,* seems incongruous, and fails in the proper apportionment of the clauses.—*The angel of the waters* is plainly the angel who presides over the element of water; see Exc. 1. I. 5.—*Δίκαιος, just,* viz. in the way of retribution. —*Ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν* = יְהוָה, the self-existent God.—*Ὅσιος* here as *hating sin,* adverse to all impurity.—*Ἔκρινας*, lit. *hast condemned,* but here in the secondary sense *punished* or *executed judgment.*—*Προφητῶν* means here the distinguished inspired teachers of Christianity; comp. 1 Cor. 14: 3 seq. It should be noted also, that the angel who presides over the rivers and fountains of water, and keeps them pure and wholesome, does not complain, in this case, that they have been disturbed, but fully recognizes the justice of God in thus rewarding those who have loved to shed blood.

(7) And I heard the altar saying: Yea, Lord God Almighty, faithful and just are thy judgments!

Angel of the altar must of course be implied here by the word *θυσιαστηρίον*, or *him of the altar,* which would amount to the same thing. See Exc. I. ut supra.—*Ἀληθιναί, true*, i. e. in accordance with threatenings to the wicked and promises to the righteous, therefore *faithful, exhibiting good faith.*—The angel of the altar is here introduced as confirming the declarations of the angel of the waters; and inasmuch as the altar stands in the temple above, in the immediate presence of the Godhead, so confirmation from such a source shows at once that all is approved by the Court of Heaven. Comp. a like confirmation in 5: 14.

(8) And the fourth [angel] poured out his vial upon the sun, and it was given to him to scorch men with vehement heat.

The seven angels are regarded as retaining their station in the *upper* region. Of course the sun can easily be reached from this station. The

sun, thus smitten, sends out the fiercest and most scorching rays, which the author names *πῦρ, fire*, inasmuch as the word *καῦμα* would not suffice for the intensity demanded. The Sirocco, the stroke of the sun, the *mirage*, all serve to aid us in conceiving of the nature of the plague thus inflicted. In chap. 8: 7, a rain of hail and *fire* and blood burns up a third part of all the productions of the earth; while in 8: 12 the fourth angel sounds his trumpet, and one third part of the heavenly luminaries are *darkened*. Here then is quite a variation of the imagery.—But what is the effect of this grievous judgment?

(9) And men were sorely scorched, and they blasphemed the name of the God who hath power over these plagues, and repented not so as to give glory to him.

Ἐκαυματίσθησαν . . . καῦμα μέγα, belongs to a class of expressions, where the act. voice governs two Accusatives, Gramm. § 104. 1. *a*; and the passive retains the latter, Ib. § 105, see Kühner, § 558, a, *a*.—*Δοῦναι αὐτῷ δόξαν, so as to give* = *ὥστε δοῦναι* etc.; for the Inf. mode may express either *design* or *sequence*. However great their griefs or sufferings were, they did not bring them to such an attitude of mind as made them submissive, nor inspire them with filial awe; comp. 9: 20, 21, and apparently the converse of this in 11: 13. But see the Comm. there.

(10, 11) And the fifth [angel] poured out his vial upon the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was darkened, and men gnawed their tongues by reason of pain; and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their ulcers, and repented not of their works.

The throne of the beast does not here mean merely the emperor's chair of state, but the metropolis, i. e. the place where the throne was, the central point of the empire. *Darkness* overspreads this, which is the emblem of doom and terror. From the metropolis this spreads out over all parts of the empire. Men are so grieved and tormented by it, (comp. the darkness of Egypt which could be felt, Ex. 10: 21—23), that they gnawed their tongues through pain, i. e. vexation; a most significant expression of the writhings of anguish.—As before (v. 9), they blaspheme God *ἐκ, on account of, by reason of*, their anguish, etc. With the distress occasioned by the darkness, is here also associated the *ulcerations* under which they still laboured; see v. 2 above.—*Καὶ οὐ μετανόησαν ἐκ τ. ἔρ. αὐτῶν*, an elliptical expression, or at any rate a *constructio praegnans; They repented not* [and turned not] *from their works;* see on 9: 20, where the same formula occurs.

(12) And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, so that the way for kings from the rising of the sun might be prepared.

The circumstance of *drying up the Euphrates*, so as to give the kings

of the East an easy passage through it, has its basis, no doubt, in the dividing of the waters of the Red Sea, that the children of Israel might pass through. See expressions of the same tenor in Is. 11: 15, where the Nile is spoken of as *divided*, in order to become passable for the returning Jews. But why the *kings of the East*? Plainly because Parthia and her allies were then the only powers that could pretend to rival the Romans in the strife of war. The Parthians often drove back, and at last confined, the Romans to the western bank of the Euphrates, retaining the dominion of Middle Asia for themselves. The Apocalyptist, therefore, here threatens war upon the Roman empire, by the only power which then could make it with any prospect of success. Even to the western parts of Asia had the Parthians sometimes urged their invasion and conquests. It is not necessary to suppose a *literal* prediction and fulfilment here. Enough that the symbol employed is exceedingly significant. The Roman empire must be attacked, divided, weakened, by enemies; and this is most significantly expressed here, by adverting to the only enemies which, when this book was written, were able to make any impression upon that empire.

Ewald and others suppose, that John had in view here the hariolation which predicted, that Nero should flee to the East, and there rouse up and unite many kingdoms, and then come and invade Italy and burn Rome. Possibly this may be so; but it is not necessary to suppose all this. Enough that John employs imagery, or a symbol, which was very significant; and that he does this for the reasons already given. There can be no doubt, indeed, that such an expectation about Nero was diffused extensively in the East; as the passages from the Sibylline Oracles (see in first part of Exc. III.) and other writings abundantly show. But John is here predicting a reality, something which will take place, not merely, as in some other cases, saying something concerning Nero which might serve to make him known to his readers. He does not indeed describe such a reality, as his words would designate if *literally* understood, but one in the sense above stated.

Filled with apprehension at the approach of this formidable enemy, the beast summons all his energies to prepare for combat. His coadjutors, also, are roused up by him to make earnest efforts in order to accomplish the same end. So the sequel:

(13, 14) And I saw, from the mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast and from the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, like frogs, (for they are spirits of demons working miracles), which go forth to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Here a new symbol is introduced, by the exigency of the occasion. The beast, Satan, and the false prophet, breathe forth evil demons from

their mouths, who go out and enter into the kings that were subject to the Roman power, possess them, and influence them to unite with the beast in one great effort to meet and crush the coming enemy. These Spirits are compared to *frogs*, because this animal was detested as unclean and annoying. Perhaps the noise and bluster which they make were in the mind of the writer, as an object of comparison with the boasting and noisy pretences of the heathen hierophants.

For they are the spirits of demons working miracles, i. e. the unclean spirits sent forth are in reality of demoniacal disposition, being such as work false or pretended miracles in order to deceive men. Of course they are substantially of the same character as the second beast, whose chief efforts seem to be made in the way of false miracles; see 13: 13—15. And the work assigned to these demoniacal agents is altogether congruous. In what way could men in general be so effectually misled, and held fast to their heathen superstitions, as by showing them that the gods whom they worshipped could bestow miraculous powers? By so doing, they seemed to give convincing evidence of their reality and their supremacy. When the Christian appealed to the miracles wrought in his church, the heathen would say: 'We stand upon ground equally tenable. Our gods everywhere display their efficiency.' Consequently there was no one thing which demoniacal influence could accomplish, that was more injurious to the interests of Christianity, or more delusive to the heathen, than the so-called *miracles* of the heathen priests and prophets. Nothing, moreover, would serve more effectually to keep up the spirit of persecution and bitterness against Christianity, than the apparent miracles of the heathen hierophants; and consequently we might expect, that the influence of demons, who were of such a character as the text describes, would be directed to unite all the heathen with the beast, in his attempts to destroy the Christian church.*

* In Eisenmenger, Jud. Entd. II. p. 406, is a passage respecting an evil spirit, (from the book *Maase*, c. 43), which speaks of his appearing to Rabbi Channina in the shape of a *frog*; and in Artemidorus, Oneirocrit. II. 15, *frogs* are represented as the symbols of evil spirits. John is not singular, then, in the choice of a symbol here. The idea of demoniacal possession was very familiar to the Jews; as is apparent everywhere from the Gospels. So the ἃ ἐκπορεύ'εται denotes, first, the *proceeding forth* from the mouths of the dragon, beast, and false prophet; then, secondly, the entrance *into* or *upon* (ἐπί) the confederate kings, etc. By false miracles, and by their influence on these kings, they persuade them to unite with the beast in his war upon the church; comp. 17: 12—15, 17. Ewald, on the contrary, represents the kings and the beast as united here to *attack* Rome; comparing chap. 17: 16, and at the same time referring to the hariolation, that Nero, after his banishment, would return from the East, associated with many kings, and would overthrow and burn the city of Rome. But the tenor of the context here, also v. 16, and chap. 19: 19, seem to speak plainly against such an inter-

The day of Jehovah, יוֹם יְהוָה, is everywhere in the O. Testament a name for a *day of evil*, and mostly one of sore punishment. See *the great day of the Lord* in Zeph. 1: 14—18, and comp. Ezek. 13: 5. Joel 1: 15. 2: 11. Is. 13: 6 et al. The Apocalyptist has added to θεοῦ the attributive παντοκράτορος, in order to increase the intensity of his representation, and to show the absolute certainty of victory over the enemies of the church.

When the author joins ἐκείνης with ἡμέρας, he means of course to render the latter word emphatic and distinctive. So the same phraseology is employed in Matt. 7: 22. 26: 29. Acts. 2: 18. 2 Thes. 1: 10, where it refers to the day of Christ's coming. So here, reference must be made to a day, i. e. a time, well understood by Christians, when Christ would appear in vindication of his disciples, and to the terror and confusion of his enemies.

It should also be noticed here, that οἰκουμένης ὅλης = the Roman empire, (comp. Acts 17: 6. 24: 5. Jos. Antiq. XII. 3. 1. Herodian, V. 2. 5), is placed in opposition to the ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν in v. 12; which makes still more decidedly against the exegesis of Ewald. The meaning is not, that the demoniacal spirits collect the army for the purpose of its being punished, but for the purposes of giving battle to opposed or hostile forces, viz. those from the East. The battle however must, under the control of an irresistible Providence, be one in which the power of Almighty God will be displayed in punishing his enemies; although this is very different from what these enemies intend or expect.

(15) Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he who watcheth, and keepeth his garments, that he may not walk naked, and men see his shame.

An interjectional clause, which should be read as parenthetic, for it does not divert the general current of the discourse. The *practical* bearing of the writer's mind here develops itself. Having announced the certain coming of the Messiah to destroy this great army of the beasts, he distinctly warns Christians here, that he will come ὡς κλέπτης, i. e. silent, sudden, unexpected; see, on this expression, under 3: 3. He means to say: Let Christians be on the watch, and live continually in a state of readiness to receive their Lord and Master, at his coming, in a proper manner. He wills that no one, because he has promised deliverance, should remit for a moment his entire vigilance.

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pretation. The alarm of the beast on seeing the hostile demonstrations from beyond the Euphrates, accounts for his efforts to concentrate all his forces. Besides; *the battle of the great day of God Almighty*, can mean only a battle in which the punishment of the dragon, beast, and false prophet, and of all their coadjutors, will be inflicted.

He who is guilty of such remission, will be like to the man, who, not expecting the thief, lays his garments aside and gives himself to sleep. In the mean time the thief comes, and takes them away, and then he is obliged to go forth naked, and thus to be exposed in that state to the gaze of men. So will it be with the unfaithful and heedless disciple. When his Lord shall come, and summon him to service in the great contest, he will have no armour for the day of battle, nor any costume which will fit him to stand in the ranks of tried and faithful and vigilant soldiers.

(16) And they gathered them together at the place, which is called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

The verb *συνήγαγεν*, in the sing. number, corresponds to *ἐκπορεύεται* in v. 14, and both agree (as usual) with the neut. plur. *πνεύματα*. This is evidently the right construction here; for it is first said of the evil spirits, that *they went forth to gather together*, etc., and then, that *they did gather together*, etc. —*Ἀὐτούς* means of course *the* (tributary) *kings of the whole empire*, v. 14.—The place, *Armageddon*, is ominous of the result of the battle. The meaning is, *the mount of Megiddo*, הַר מְגִדּוֹ. Megiddo was a village in the hilly country near to mount Tabor. There Deborah and Barak destroyed Sisera and his host, Judg. 5: 19; there king Josiah was slain by the invader from Egypt, 2 K. 23: 29, 30. 2 Chron. 35: 22. But what the author particularly had his eye upon, was probably the passage in Zech. 12: 11, which speaks of a future and a great mourning over the slain in the valley of Megiddo. Into a valley ominous of overthrow and slaughter, then, the unclean spirits, under the special guidance of a superintending Providence (comp. 17: 17), conduct the assembled forces of the beast and his allies; and there in due time they come to a final end (see 19: 19 seq.), by the interposition of an almighty Conqueror.

In the mean time, the metropolis, and all the great cities of the confederate kings, receive, at the pouring out of the seventh vial, a deadly blow. And thus is the way prepared for the destruction of the beast, i. e. for the final conquest of all the pagan powers.

(17) And the seventh [angel] poured out his vial upon the air, and there went forth a loud voice from the temple [of heaven], from the throne, saying: It is done.

Upon the air. The first view which one takes of this expression, would rather incline him to suppose that the dominions of *the prince of the power of the air* is here invaded; see Exc. I. II. *c.* But the sequel does not appear definitely to recognize this. It seems more probable, that we are to regard the *air* in this case as the element, by which is to be engendered the dreadful storm that follows, which is to over-

throw the principal cities of the beast and his confederates. The appropriateness of this, when viewed in such a light, cannot well be denied.—*From the temple* would leave undecided whether the voice was that of God, or of an angel in his presence; but *ἀπὸ τοῦ θρόνου* decides this point, and is a clause in apposition designedly for the purpose of explanation. It decides that God himself is the speaker.—*Γέγονε*, a Perf. tense, in order to denote the *full certainty* of the destruction threatened, i. e. it is as though it had been already contemplated. Such a use of the Perfect even the classic writers make.

(18) And there were lightnings, and loud thunders; and there was a great earthquake, such as never was from the time when men were upon the earth, such an earthquake, so great.

Φωναὶ καὶ βρονταί, Hendiadys, for *thundering noises*; see on 4: 5. The thunder of course follows the lightning.—*The great earthquake* seems here to be the rocking of the earth by reason of the thunder.—*Ἀφ' οὗ*, i. e. *ἀπὸ χρόνου οὗ*.—*Men were upon the earth*, i. e. from the time when men were first created.—*Τηλικοῦτος*, *such* in an emphatic sense.—*Οὕτω μέγας*, *so great*, adding to the emphasis, and pointing out the particular in which this earthquake differed from all others. The whole phrase is plainly designed to convey an idea of intensity.

(19) And the great city was severed into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and Babylon the great was remembered before God, that he should give to her the cup of the wine of his fierce indignation.

Ἐγένετο . . . εἰς τρία μέρη, *became three parts*, the number *three* being used, as everywhere in this book, in a symbolical way. The meaning is, that the city was severed and broken in pieces, so that the whole was reduced to a ruinous state. But perhaps the meaning is, that chasms in the earth divided the parts of the city; comp. v. 20.—*The cities of the nations fell*, i. e. the capital cities of the confederate kings, the allies of the beast (v. 14, and 17: 13, 14, 17), were also reduced to a ruinous state; for *ἔπεσον* here is nearly equivalent to *ἐγένετο . . . εἰς τρία μέρη* in the preceding clause, as to its generic meaning.—*Δοῦναι*, elliptically for *αὐτὸν δοῦναι* or *ὥστε αὐτὸν δοῦναι*, or simply as the Inf. of explication. Brachylogy of course may supersede the smaller words, which are implied.—*The cup of his fierce indignation*, see on 14: 10, where is the like phrase. Meaning: God remembered the crimes of Babylon, so as to bring awful and exemplary punishment upon her.

(20) And every island fled, and the mountains were found no more.

The same circumstances are mentioned in Rev. 6: 12—14, as being the sequel of the great earthquake there mentioned. An effect not uncommon of severe earthquakes is, to sink islands and mountains. To

this the writer adverts; while, at the same time, the circumstances are to be here regarded as serving principally the purpose of heightening the description of the scene. See on 6: 12—14.

(21) And great hail, as of a talent's weight, fell from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed the God of heaven because of the plague of the hail, for the plague was exceedingly great.

Ταλαντιαία, weighing a talent, or *equal in weight to a talent.* The Attic talent was about 57 lbs. troy weight; the Jewish talent about 114 lbs. troy. Understood in either way, the horrors of such a storm are inconceivably great. The blasphemy that followed, from the worshippers of the beast who were still impenitent, is a natural circumstance. —The imagery of the hail here is not novel; see 11: 19. Ex. 9: 22—26. Ps. 78: 47. 105: 32. Josh. 10: 11 al.

In the effects of the storm here described, which came from the air on which the vial was poured out, it is easy to see the pledge of what is predicted by *γέγονε*. The work of destruction is not indeed completed; but it is begun in such a way that the pagan nations must be greatly disheartened, and the followers of the Lamb encouraged.

ECONOMY OF CHAP. XVII.

[The careful reader, who is looking out for all the developments of an author's plan, when he reads his work, will find here matter of comparison with the closing part of the *first* catastrophe. There, the last or seventh seal is subdivided into seven portions, each of which is marked by the successive sound of so many trumpets. For variety's sake, or for some other reason to which the author of the Apocalypse has not adverted, he has omitted any exact correspondence between the second and the first catastrophe, in this respect. We have, in the second catastrophe, only one series of seven, viz. of the *vials.* But still we have, as a sequel to the last vial, a succession of events which occupy no inconsiderable portion of the book. Thus 16: 18—21, and chap. xviii. and xix, are occupied with disclosing the sequel of the outpouring of the last vial. In respect to *delay,* then, there is some correspondence worthy of note between the completing of the first catastrophe and that of the second. In the first, much delay follows the breaking of the seventh seal, before destruction is completed; in the second, the case is the same, but it is not marked, as in the first, by a new series of *sevens.*

Let the reader mark well, moreover, the episodes in chap. x. xi. 1—14, which delay the final action, in order to render it the more interesting. So here; chap. xvii. is wholly occupied with an *explanatory* vision, designed for the purpose of making the reader understand whose destruction it is which is going on. Then comes another advance in the development of the main action, in 18: 1—7. Then follows a second episode, containing

the lament over the fall of Babylon; all of which is matter of interest, and is also relevant and congruous, although it does not make advances toward the final catastrophe. In 18: 21 seq. we have another solemn assurance of the *final* fall of Babylon; just as before, in respect to the fall of spiritual Sodom, a repeated assurance is given in 10: 5—7. In 19: 1—10 we hear the anticipative shout of victory among the hosts of heaven, just as in 11: 15—18; and then comes the final catastrophe, with its sublime and awful accompaniments, as in 11: 19, but with more particularity and more demonstrations of power. This accords well with the nature of the case. The first catastrophe respected a little province only of the Roman empire; the second has respect to πᾶσα ἡ οἰκουμένη—*to the great city which holdeth dominion over the kings of the earth*, 17: 18. Can we rationally doubt, with such facts as these before us, that the writer intended his readers should regard him as setting before their minds two distinct and successive catastrophes?

If critics would examine more minutely the plan of this book, and the execution of that plan; the relative bearings of one part on another, and the similarity which is still apparent amid all its variety; if they would then advert to the *trichotomy* which extends not only to its general arrangement, but to almost all its minuter portions; I do not well see how they could adopt the opinion, that there is but *one* catastrophe. Spiritual Sodom, great Babylon, and Gog and Magog, exhibit a trichotomy as distinct as representation can make it. See § 7 in Vol. I.

As to the manner in which the contents of this chapter harmonize with the general plan of the work, and as to what the general design of it is with respect to the reader, enough has been already said above. I have only to suggest here, that a new scene, i. e. a new place of vision and symbols in most respects new are here introduced, for the sake of designating the objects which the writer designs to explain, and at the same time of distinguishing this episode from the general tenor of the context. Some of the symbols adopted for explanation, would in themselves be quite as difficult for us to understand as those of which they are designed to be an explanation; so that if we were left merely with them, one might feel that the explanation was perhaps darker than the text. But the angel-interpreter, who accompanies John throughout this vision, has expressly undertaken an explanation of the symbols. Yet even this is such, that most readers of the present day probably find no more obscure chapter in all the Apocalypse than the seventeenth, which is inserted expressly for the purpose of explanation. Yet this simple fact, viz., that it was written for such a purpose, ought to lead us to suspect, that the difficulty lies more in ourselves than in the writer. Were we placed in the circumstances of the first readers of the Apocalypse, will any one doubt that we might be able to understand the writer? He wrote, not only in order that he might be read, but also that he might be *understood*. Why then should we suppose, that a mind like his would not accomplish its design? I must believe that it did. Yet the difficulties under which the writer laboured, and which have frequently been adverted to in the preceding pages, were very great. He could not speak openly, plainly, and fully, without bringing himself, and all his readers, under the cognizance of the watchful Roman governor. What he could consistently do to make his meaning plain, he has done. And yet, living at such a distance as we do from the sphere of action in which the writer

moved, and unacquainted as we are with many minute circumstances of the times, it may be difficult now, and perhaps impossible, to obtain full satisfaction in respect to some parts of the author's vision. Certain it is, that if we neglect the history of the times when the Apocalypse was written, and in particular the history of Nero and the Neronic persecution, we can do nothing more than merely *guess* at the meaning of some parts of chap. xvii. On the other hand, if we are willing that history should aid us in unfolding the meaning of dark phrases; if we take into view the special object of the chapter before us, viz. *the purpose of explanation*, and not the advancement of the main action of the drama; if we allow a reference to popular belief merely for the purpose and in the way of *explanation*, (and not of prediction); then most of the darkness that seems to rest on chap. xvii. will be dissipated, and the whole become a continuous, consistent, and really *explanatory* vision. The course now indicated is that which I feel bound to pursue; and if the reader does not assent to all that I may propose, he knows at least that he has the liberty of thinking and of judging for himself.]

(1) And there came one of the seven angels, who had the seven vials, and spake with me, saying: Come, I will show thee the condemnation of the great whore, who sitteth over many waters.

Inasmuch as these seven angels had been commissioned with the work of destruction, they must of course have well understood the purpose and object of their operations. Appropriately is one of them commissioned to perform the task of explanation to John. *Εἷς* = *τίς* here; and so elsewhere, i. e. a certain one.—*Ἐκ* renders the following Gen. more specific.—*Δείξω*, *I will show*, viz. by signs or symbols; for the word is particularly adapted to signify this.—*Τῆς μεγάλης* as the epithet of the harlot, because she is mistress of an almost boundless dominion, and possesses great wealth, splendour, and power, and by all this is distinguished from harlots in general; or *μεγάλης* may be sarcastic here, in reference to *βαβυλὼν ἡ μεγάλη*.—*Over many waters* is explained, in v. 15, as meaning *over many nations*. The multitude and the boundless extent of the ocean-waters probably gave rise to this metaphor or symbol. Certain it is, that the Jewish Rabbies frequently employ it; see Wetst. on v. 15, and Eisenm. Judenthum, I. p. 771.

(2) With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and they who inhabit the earth have become drunk by the wine of her fornication.

See the remarks on 14: 8, where the like phraseology occurs. Sentiment: 'Rome, wholly given to idolatry and to worshipping the beast, has allured and seduced all its tributary nations to do the same.' So Babylon, Ninive, Tyre, etc., are represented as harlots by the O. Testament prophets; Nah. 3: 4. Is. 23: 17. In Jer. 51: 7 is the prototype of the verse before us.

(3) And he brought me spiritually into a desert; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast, full of the names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

Εἰς ἔρημον, into a desert, appropriate to symbolize the future condition of the beast.—*Ἐν πνεύματι, mentally, spiritually;* comp. *ἐν τῇ ὁράσει* in 9: 17, and *ἐν πνεύματι* in 1: 10. The writer means to say, that he was *mentally*, but not corporeally, brought into a desert.—*Γυναῖκα* etc., altogether in the manner of the O. Testament prophets, who everywhere personify great cities by *women;* see v. 18.—*Scarlet beast*, because red or scarlet is a symbol of its bloody disposition.—*Full of blasphemous names*, comp. 13: 1, where the same beast is described in the same way. The blasphemous names are doubtless to be regarded as inscribed on the frontlets of each head, comp. 13: 1; they are *blasphemous*, because they ascribe to man that which belongs only to God.—*Having seven heads and ten horns* identifies this beast with that described in 13: 1 seq. See on the words there.

(4) And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, holding a golden cup in her hands, filled with abominations, even the impurities of her fornication;

Purple and scarlet were the chosen colours for display and magnificence of dress; comp. Ezek. 28: 13. Is. 47: 1, 2, 8. Such display is appropriate to the character named. The colour moreover is symbolic, as explained above.—*Πορφυροῦν* and *κόκκινον* are both *adjectives*, agreeing with *περίβλημα* implied.—*Κεχρυσωμένη*, lit. *inaurata, gilt*, but as we express it, *adorned.*—*Holding a golden cup in her hand* is appropriate; for she makes the nations *to drink.*—*Full of abominations*, i. e. filled with an intoxicating draught that leads to the commission of many abominations.—The construction *γέμον βδελυγμάτων, καὶ τὰ ἀκάθαρτα*, first a Gen. and then an Acc. after *γέμον*, is singular. The first inquiry naturally seems to be, whether we may not read *ἔχουσα ποτήριον . . . καὶ τὰ ἀκάθαρτα*, making the latter dependent on *ἔχουσα*. But this seems to give a less tolerable sense; although Wolfius adopts it. Ewald assigns the latter construction to the class of *Hebraisms;* for in Hebrew מָלֵא (= *γέμον*) governs the Acc.; so that we have here both a genuine Greek and Hebrew construction. To avoid this, some copies read *ἀκαθάρτητος* (Gen.); but Wolfius says that no such Greek word can be found. *Ἀκαθαρσία* is the word employed to express the idea in question. If *ἀκάθαρτα* be made to refer to some attractive ornaments or symbols adapted to rouse the sensual passions, we may then, with Wolfius, join it to *ἔχουσα*; or we may regard it as in apposition with *ποτήριον*, and exegetical of its meaning, as I have done in the version.

(5) And upon her forehead was a name mysteriously written: BABYLON THE GREAT; (the mother of harlots, and of the abominations of the earth).

The inscription of names on the forehead is a frequently recurring idea, in this book; see 2: 17. 7: 1—5. 14: 1; also 19: 12. 13: 1. 17: 3. So in respect to the woman, i. e. Rome, in the present case. But here, this is rather to lead the reader to consider *who the woman is*, than for any other purpose.—*Mystery* our English version has translated and pointed as though it were a part of the inscription itself on the forehead. This however seems to me very doubtful. Why not translate, *a name written mysteriously*, i. e. *κατὰ μυστήριον*, Acc. adverbial? And what is the mysteriously written name? It is *Babylon*, etc. Now as Babylon is not the *proper* name of the city intended, so the name is *mysteriously* employed, and requires some investigation to find out its true sense. But if the word *μυστήριον* be taken as a part of the inscription itself, then still the writer, by affixing such an epithet, designs to give his readers notice, that the name inscribed is not the real and proper name.

The last clause, *the mother of harlots*, etc., I have pointed in such a way as to indicate, that it is an exclamation of the author, and not a part of the inscription. Is it probable, that Babylon would thus openly and shamelessly wear a frontlet proclaiming such a character? Her pride and vain-glory would forbid it. But the title, *Babylon the Great*, she might well be supposed to assume; and nothing was more natural than for the author to subjoin, by way of comparison and for the sake of illustrating the mystery: "The mother of harlots, i. e. the chief or leader of all harlots, and of the abominations of the earth!"

(6) And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and seeing her I wondered much.

The phraseology is derived from the barbarous custom, (still extant among many pagan nations), of drinking the blood of enemies slain in the way of revenge. Here then the fury of the persecutors is depicted in a most graphic manner. Blood is drunk by them even to intoxication, i. e. copiously, in great quantities. The effect of drinking blood is said to be, to exasperate and to intoxicate with passion and a desire of vengeance. But the *copiousness* of the draught, and so the extent and bitterness of persecution, is particularly marked by the expression here. —*And I wondered much*, the verb and conjugate noun expressing, as usual, intensity of action.—The repetition of *ἐκ τοῦ αἵματος*, and so of like circumstances, is specially characteristic of this book, and is a trait of Hebraism; comp. 16: 13.

(7) And the angel said to me: Why dost thou wonder? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast which beareth her, which hath seven heads and ten horns.

I will tell thee, etc. The symbols proffered to the view of John, were not in themselves indications sufficiently explicit of what was meant. But they afforded a basis for explanation; and on this basis the angel-interpreter builds his *eclaircissement*. The model of this part of the machinery of the Apocalypse, (if I may be allowed the expression), is found in Zechariah, Daniel, and Ezekiel.—*Διατί ἐθαύμασας*, lit. *why hast thou marvelled*, referring rather to what had been done, than to what was now doing. The Pres. tense might have been used; but the Aor. is more courteous here.—*I will tell thee the mystery*, i. e. I will explain to thee that which now seems so mysterious or dark, and which has excited so much wonder. Comp. 7: 13, 14, for the like occurrence.

(8) The beast which thou sawest, was, and is not, and will come up from the abyss, and go to destruction; and those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was, and is not, and will make his appearance.

The *beast* (not the woman) is first characterized, as being, after all, the most important particular of the symbols. Plainly here the reigning emperor is characterized, so that *beast*, although in itself a generic appellation marking the *imperial power* of Rome, may, like our words Majesty, Excellency, Honour, Worship, etc., be employed at any time in a *specific* sense. So it plainly is employed here, because the object here is to explain who and what is meant by the *beast* in the former visions. It would be needless to repeat here what has been already said under chap. 13: 3, and will be said in Exc. III. The well known hariolation respecting Nero, that he would be assassinated, and disappear for a while, and then make his appearance again to the confusion of all his enemies, solves the apparent enigma before us. What the angel says, seems to be equivalent to this: 'The *beast* means the Roman emperors, specifically Nero, of whom the report spread throughout the empire is, that he will revive, after being apparently slain, and will come as it were from the abyss or Hades; but he will still perish, and that speedily. The *beast* symbolizes him of whom it is said, that all the world will wonder at and worship him, when they see him thus returned, as they suppose, from the under-world—that is, all whose names have not been inscribed in the book of life before the world was made.'

In respect to the tenses here employed—*ἦν, οὐκ ἔστι, μέλλει ἀναβαίνειν*—prophetic style pays little regard indeed to the chronological order of events. The beast of a past time, of a present one, or of a future time, might be spoken of equally well, (as every one must know who

has critically read the Hebrew prophets), in the manner exhibited by our text. Nothing important can be made out of this, either for or against the fact, that Nero was living or dead when the Apocalypse was written.

And they shall wonder, etc. Here the special cause of wonder seems to be, that the beast has as it were risen from the dead. But is this a part of what the angel, or John, *predicts* as a matter which will be *actual* fact? That wonder, or superstitious reverence for Nero, was greatly augmented by the story of the soothsayers respecting his future fate and fortune, there can be no good reason to doubt. But what has already been said, more than once, should be recalled to mind here, viz. that the object of this chapter is *explanation*. The grand problem to be solved is: Who is meant by the *beast?* The solution offered is: 'He is meant, of whom it has long been reported, that he will speedily disappear, and then reappear and be the object of general wonder.' I will not say, that immediately after Nero's death, what is here said might not have been uttered by John; but plainly it is more appropriate and probable, if uttered *during his life;* because his death must speedily give the intelligent public information of a satisfactory kind, that the vaticination concerning the tyrant was not true. In this case, there would be less temptation to refer to the oracular declaration; for the story told by it would soon become distrusted by many. But independently of all this, the Apocalypse throughout purports to be written *ingruenti persecutione;* how then could it be written *after* the death of Nero? At all events, the writing must have been executed so speedily after his death, that time had not been given to circulate the news of it.

Whose names are not written, etc.; see the explanation, in remarks on chap. 13: 8.—*Βλεπόντων τὸ θηρίον κ. τ. λ.* The construction is unusual, at least not very common. The Gen. *absolute* (as the Gen. here may be) is usually employed, when a clause is inserted the subject of which is *diverse* from that of the main sentence. But here the subject of the Gen. *βλεπόντων* and of the verb *θαυμάσονται* are the same. This construction, however unusual, is still admissible; and it is found among the very best Greek writers; see Gramm. § 172. 2. I have rendered *βλεπόντων* as containing the adsignification of time, viz. *when;* see Gramm. § 169. 3.

Καὶ πάρεσται in many Codd. reads *καίπερ ἐστίν*, i. e. *although he is*, or *is alive*. The meaning of the whole phrase would then be: The beast was, and is not, i. e. has disappeared, *although he is*, viz. is still extant. There is no special objection to such a meaning; but *πάρεσται* is better established, and is admitted by Griesbach, Knapp, Lachmann, and Hahn. Moreover *πάρεσται* is only an exchange of phraseology

for the preceding *μέλλει ἀναβαίνειν ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου*, and as such is in itself altogether more probable than *καίπερ ἐστίν*.

(9) Here is a meaning which compriseth wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth.

An unseemly division of the sense is made here, by means of the verse, which should end with *σοφίαν*. I understand *ὧδε* as referring to what *precedes*. The writer or speaker means to say, that in what he has said about the beast, there is something which demands special sagacity in order to explain it. In other words; it is not to be taken as a prophetic declaration on the part of the speaker, after the ordinary manner of symbols in the vision, but as having a peculiar meaning in reference to the wide spread oracular declarations with regard to the beast or Nero. *Specification*, then, and not prediction, is the main object here.

If any one objects to this, we may ask why John could not as well appeal in such a way to popular opinion, as the Saviour does to the casting out of demons by the *sons* of the Pharisees, or to the roaming of evil spirits through desert places? An *argumentum ex concessis* is not forbidden, in some cases; particularly when, as here, it is employed only for illustration. But see in Exc. III.

The seven heads are seven mountains (or *hills*) *on which the woman sits.* This is one mode of coming at the dilucidation of the visions. *Septicollis Roma* was famous the world over, and no room is left here for mistake about the *place*. The *woman*, i. e. the city (v. 18), *sits on these*, i. e. Rome is built on seven hills. The beast with seven heads bears the woman; and the seven heads being taken (as they are here) as emblems of hills, and the woman as the symbol of the great city, all is plain.

(10) And there are seven kings. Five have fallen; one is; the other has not yet come, and when he comes he will remain but a little time.

The main object of the interpreter is to explain *what* or *who* is meant by the *beast*. He does not dwell, therefore, on the city and the hills, but hastens to the *kings*. The seven heads *are seven kings*. *Βασιλεύς*, as an appellation for a Roman emperor, was usual among the Greeks. —*Five are fallen*, i. e. Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius. Nero is the sixth; Galba succeeded, who reigned only seven months. Or if we begin with Augustus, then Galba is the sixth; and Otho, who succeeded him, reigned but three months.

But why only *seven* kings? First because the number *seven* is the reigning symbolic number of the book; then, secondly, because this covers the ground which the writer means specially to occupy, viz., it

goes down to the period when the persecution then raging would cease. All this is congruous too with the seven heads of the beast.

The manner of the declaration here seems to decide, beyond all reasonable appeal, against a later period than about A. D. 67 or 68, for the composition of the Apocalypse.

(11) And the beast which was, and is not, he is also an eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth to destruction.

It seems quite evident here, that if we compare *καὶ αὐτὸς ὄγδοός ἐστι* with the *μέλλει ἀναβαίνειν ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου* and also the *καὶ πάρεσται* of v. 8, we shall see at once that *καὶ ὄγδοός ἐστι* is equivalent to the other two phrases, differing only in the mode of expression. The beast that now personifies the imperial power, is the one of whom it has been said, that *he was and is not.* And not only so, but also that he will reappear, i. e. he will make another member besides the Heptade just named, although in fact he is one of this Heptade, *ἐκ τῶν ἑπτά ἐστι.* All the attempts by the older commentators at explaining this passage, at least all which I have examined, (and they are many), are either so fanciful, or so incongruous, that it is impossible (for me at least) to find any solid satisfaction in them, or anything to meet the demands of exegesis. Must it not be, that these words were understood when they were first published? Or, at any rate, that they were meant to be understood? If so, how was this possible, except on such grounds as history furnishes? How was it possible in the nature of things, that mere fanciful resemblances of something to happen in future ages, should be rightly made out in such a case by the mass of readers? But if we adopt the explanation made out by appeal to *historical* grounds, then all is plain and easy. We can see at once, how the beast (Nero) could be one of the seven, and yet an *eighth.* For the reason that a *person* is meant, the speaker says *αὐτός* and not *αὐτό.*

But why an *eighth*, rather than a ninth or tenth? Simply because, if Nero were expected to reappear at all, it would naturally be supposed to happen during, or immediately after, the reign of his successor. Such a tyrant as Nero would not patiently endure exile or seclusion for a long time. Thus the angel, if interpreted in this way, is not made to give a '*dilucidation* which is much more obscure than the original.' Heinrichs, who supposes *Satan* to be the beast here, says of v. 8 seq.: *Infit explicatio, quae tamen, ut passim alibi, ad dissipandas tenebras parum apta videbitur.* The *οὐκ ἔστι* he makes to refer to Satan's being cast into the abyss before the Millennium, and his *reäppearance* is to take place at the close of that period. To represent Satan as influencing or presiding over all the Romish heathen emperors, would be scriptural enough; but where is the precedent for representing him as *one of the*

seven emperors? Heinrichs tries to avoid this absurdity by saying, that ἐκ τῶν ἑπτά ἐστι only means, that Satan is of the same cast or character with them. But where, in all the Bible, is the devil likened to men; although men are sometimes, indeed, likened to "their father the devil?" Such views as these of our text could scarcely fail of exciting complaints of obscurity, like to those which Heinrichs utters.

Other interpretations of the passage before us may be found in abundance. But as I can never abandon a *historical* mode of explanation in order to take up with a conjectural or merely imaginary one, I shall not adduce them here. The reader who desires to see them, may easily find them in abundance, in any of the more copious commentaries.

(12) And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings who have not yet received kingly power, but with the aid of the beast they receive authority as kings for one hour.

In Dan. 7: 24 the ten horns of the beast, there described, symbolize ten *successive* kings; here plainly they designate ten *contemporaneous* ones. That subordinate and tributary kings are here meant, is plain from the nature of the declarations. They have not at any time received βασιλείαν, *kingship*, i. e. complete royal authority. They receive authority only μίαν ὥραν; and even this they receive μετὰ τοῦ θηρίου, i. e. with the aid, concurrence, or coöperation of the beast; for μετά often marks such a relation, Winer's Gramm. § 51. h. If this of itself be not sufficient evidence, yet such evidence may be found in v. 13. What the speaker means to say is, that the tributary kings of the Roman empire, in compliance with the desire of the beast on whom they are dependent for their authority, unite with him in persecuting the church. So the following verse:

(13) These have one mind, and their power and authority they give to the beast.

That is, these are united in one and the same purpose, viz. to exercise what power and authority they have in subserviency to the beast, thus aiding him to accomplish his designs.—Διδόασιν, third pers. plur. of Pres. tense, being the Attic form, instead of the κοινή form διδοῦσι. Kühner, § 200. a. Very clearly does this show, that persecution, when the Apocalypse was written, was extended to the provinces and subordinate kingdoms of the Roman empire.

(14) The same shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and they who are with him are called and elect and faithful.

Two reasons why the Lamb must prove victorious; first, he is King of kings and Lord of lords, and secondly, he is accompanied by forces of his own choice, selected from the mass and not enlisted by chance or

taken by lot, and true and faithful to their great leader. Although each of the adjectives employed here is often expressive of Christian character and condition, yet in the present case the reference is of the *military* cast, in relation to the *war* just mentioned. Who these troops are, may be seen in Rev. 19: 14.

(15) And he saith unto me: The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are people and multitudes, and nations and tongues.

That is, the waters are the symbol of *multitudinous people*, (λαοὶ καὶ ὄχλοι I take to be a Hendiadys), and of nations with different tongues or languages. In other words, they designate many and widely scattered nations.—*Εἰσί, are*, the usual word throughout the N. Testament, in such cases, and employed in the sense of *means, symbolizes, designates*.

(16) And as to the ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, these same shall hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, and they shall devour her flesh, and burn her with fire.

Κέρατα and *θηρίον* are the Nom. absolute; and, although they are of the *neuter* gender, yet the demonstrative pronoun which follows, *οὗτοι*, is masc. because *persons* are meant. Ewald interprets this verse as having respect to the *predicted* return of Nero from the East, after his exile thither, and his union with confederate kings of that region, in order to invade Italy, and destroy its capital where he was assassinated. Possibly the language may have assumed its present form, from that circumstance. But here there is not so much of *explanation* on the part of John, as of *prediction*. The sentiment seems to be, that tyrants like Nero, and persecutors such as his confederates, would occasion wasting and desolation to Rome, even like to that already inflicted by Nero, who had set Rome on fire and consumed a large portion of it. In a description so highly figurative as the one before us, nothing more seems to be necessarily meant. The next verse intimates, that when God shall have accomplished his purposes, in respect to the persecutions of the church, then his time of retribution to its enemies will follow.—*Ἠρημωμένην . . . καὶ γυμνήν*, the one applying to the idea of city, the other to that of its representative, the woman. *The eating of the flesh* and *burning up with fire*, are images of such thorough destruction as was not uncommon in wars where bitter animosity reigned. At all events, *heathen* and *persecuting* Rome is to be utterly destroyed. The tributary kings, always hating her, did contribute not a little to her final downfall, and often occasioned her bloody and long continued wars. But after all, there would not perhaps be much to object to Ewald's exegesis here, provided it should be regarded merely in the light of a *dilucidation*. The sentiment would then run thus: 'To sum up all; as to the ten kings and the beast, these are they respecting whom the report is spread, that they will

come from the East, and will attack and destroy Rome.' But I give the preference to the preceding method of explanation.

(17) For God hath put it into their hearts to do his will, and to do one will and give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God shall be accomplished.

Ἔδωκεν εἰς, *put into*, for δίδωμι in the N. Testament often imitates the Heb. נָתַן, which not unfrequently means *to put, place, set*, etc. The meaning of the verse is, that while the ten kings and the beast have a unity of purpose, (μίαν γνώμην), as to persecuting the church, and while the ten kings voluntarily yield themselves to the wishes of the beast in order to accomplish this, yet God is only executing his own ultimate designs. 'He will make the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder will he restrain.' The church must indeed be cast into the burning fiery furnace; but it will not be destroyed. It will come out, at last, as gold purified from the fire.—*Until the words of God shall be accomplished*, namely, what he has said or decreed respecting the persecution of his church. The intimation of course is, that the power of the enemy cannot go beyond this; i. e. when that mark is reached, divine retribution will begin. Possibly the *words of God to be fulfilled* may here mean, the promises of deliverance made to the church. The other method of exposition, however, reaches the same goal, although by a different path.

(18) And the woman whom thou sawest, is the great city which hath dominion over the kings of the earth.

This is so graphic and specific, that no room is left for doubt as to who is meant.—*The great city* is spoken of by way of eminence, Βαβυλὼν ἡ μεγάλη. Yet this is not all; *the great city which hath dominion over the kings of the earth*, i. e. the ten or confederate kings, named in the preceding context. The number *ten*, like nearly all the numbers in this book, is to be regarded as symbolical. Whether there were more or less than this number of dependent kings, when the Apocalypse was written, matters not to the purposes of the writer or speaker. The number evidently alludes to Dan. 7: 24, where *ten* kings are mentioned, who, in various respects were to have dominion over and oppress the Jews. So in the present case; ten kings, with the beast, will unite in persecuting the church, and in efforts to destroy it. But they can proceed no further than the plan of an all-wise and overruling Providence permits.

Thus ends the episode and the explanation. The scene is immediately shifted in the sequel, and the main action of the piece speedily moves on.

FALL OF BABYLON: CHAP. XVIII.

[Before any attack was made upon the kingdom of the beast, an angel proclaimed the fall of great Babylon, 14: 8. This, however, was only in general terms. But now the seventh vial has been poured out, and the city has been shaken to its very foundation, and thus a ruinous state of things had already commenced; 16: 17—21. Final and utter extinction, however, still remains to be achieved. Accordingly an angel next appears, and not only renews the proclamation of the fall of Babylon, but describes this in such terms as necessarily to imply its *utter* ruin; 18: 1—3. A voice from heaven therefore warns all the people of God to come out from the city, and threatens ample retribution to her; 18: 4—8. The lament over her final fall is next described; first, on the part of the kings associated with her (vs. 9, 10); secondly, of the merchants who trafficked in her (vs. 11—16); and lastly, of all the seamen employed in her commerce (vs. 17—19). Finally, heaven is called upon to rejoice over her fall (v. 20); and an angel takes up a great millstone and casts it into the sea, as an emblem of her final and irretrievable ruin, accompanying this transaction, at the same time, with threats which indicate the same (vs. 21—24). As to the striking *trichotomy* of this chapter, the reader is remitted to Vol. I. § 7.]

(1) And after these things I saw another angel descending from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendour.

Another angel, i. e. one different from the angel interpreter, who had accompanied John, during the vision, for the sake of making explanation.—*Having great power* or *authority* simply designates the *rank* or *order* of the angel here, viz. that he was one of the higher order.—*By his splendour*, which is a secondary sense of the word δόξα as it is also of the equivalent Heb. כָּבוֹד; comp. Luke 2: 9. Ex. 24: 16. This accessory idea adds to the magnificence of the scene, and to the dignity of the personage who is actor.

(2) And he cried with a loud voice, saying: BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLEN —IS FALLEN! And it has become an abode of demons, and the prison-house of every unclean spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful fowl.

Demons were regarded by the Jews as inhabiting waste and desolate places; see Exc. I. II. *b*. To say then that Babylon had become the abode of demons, is to say in the strongest manner, that it had become a scene of entire ruin.—*A prison-house of every unclean spirit* is a touch from the popular pneumatology. In Is. 13: 21, 22 is a picture which is the prototype of that before us. There the שְׂעִירִים, *forest-devils*, dance among the ruins of the ancient Babylon; and in Is. 34: 14, 15, the like things are said of the desolate cities of Idumea. In the latter case, not only the שָׂעִיר, but also the לִילִית, i. e. the *sprite* or *hobgoblin* of the forest, is represented as finding its place of abode amid the ruins. So

in the text before us; not only the demons proper, but all the lower and baser sprites, the *canaille* (sit venia!) of the demon-world, find a φυλακή in ruined Babylon. This last word, φυλακή, lit. *place of keeping*, denotes more than *abode*. It is, as I have translated it, equivalent to *prison-house*; so that by constraint, and in the way of punishment, these detestable beings are cooped up there.—*And the cage of every unclean and hateful fowl*; the prototype of this is in several passages of Isaiah just cited above. There, according to this prophet, the cormorant and the screech-owl and vulture find their place amid the ruins of cities. So here, the object of the writer cannot well be misunderstood. It is to paint, in the most graphical manner, a scene of entire desolation, frequented only by horrid and detestable creatures. Φυλακή, which is generic, I have here translated *cage*, because this is appropriate.

(3) Because she hath made all nations to drink of the inflammatory wine of her fornication: and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the abundance of her luxury.

Inflammatory wine, etc., see on 14: 8.—*The merchants have become rich by the abundance of her luxury*; δυνάμεως, like the Heb. רֹב, means, in a few cases, *much* in respect to *quantity*, i. e. abundance. See Lex.—Στρήνους, *luxury, revel*. The meaning is, that the merchants had enriched themselves by the abundance of things pertaining to luxurious enjoyment, which the Babylonians had purchased of them. The design is to characterize the excess of Babylonish luxury. Sentiment: 'Babylon has corrupted and led to idolatry the nations of the earth, and has indulged to great excess in every kind of luxury.'

(4) And I heard another voice from heaven, saying: Come out of her, my people, that ye may not partake of her sins, and that ye may not receive any of her plagues.

Modelled after the ancient prophets; see the like warning in Is. 48: 29. Jer. 50: 8. 51: 6, 9, 45. So Lot is warned, in Gen. xix. The idea is, that Babylon, whose ruin has already commenced, cannot be repaired or rebuilt. It must suffer *final* and irretrievable ruin. The people of God, therefore, are exhorted to forsake it. It is the Saviour who calls to them—for he says: *My* people.—*Partake of her sins* means, share in the punishment due to her sins; for ἁμαρτία means not only *sin*, but also the fruits of sin, i. e. punishment. So the Heb. חֲטָאת and עָוֹן. The next clause, which warns against receiving her πληγῶν, shows that this is the proper exegesis.—But the *aggravation* of her guilt is not to be passed without further notice.

(5) For her sins have reached to heaven, and God hath called to mind her wrongs.

Ἐκολλήθησαν, lit. *have been joined to*, or *adhere to*. The idea is better expressed in English by the secondary sense of the verb which I have adopted, viz. *reached to*. The prototype is Jer. 51: 9.—God *hath remembered her wrongs*, i. e. the wrongs which she has done to his people. This *remembrance* implies of course a due and proper notice of the sins in question, i. e. God remembers so as to punish. The idea of *sin reaching to heaven* is not to be taken merely as designating a large mass of sin, but that sin cries to heaven, like Abel's blood, for vengeance; see Gen. 4: 10. 18: 20. This figure of speech is a great favourite with the author of the book of Enoch; see 8: 9. 9: 2, 4, 10—12. 47: 1, 2. 96: 2, 4. 60: 9, 12—16.

(6) Render to her as she has rendered [to others]; yea, give fully double to her according to her works; in the cup which she has mingled, mingle double for her.

The original exemplar is in Is. 40: 2. 61: 7; but there it is applied to reward. Comp. Job 42: 12, where all his former possessions are *doubled*. The intensity of *διπλώσατε διπλᾶ* I have expressed in the version.—The cup which is to be mingled for her is to be doubled, viz. by the strength of the inflammatory substances put into it, or by the quantity poured in. The *cup* here is, as often before, the emblem of punishment.—*ᾧ ἐκέρασε* is a case of *attraction*, perhaps the only certain one in the whole book. But this is not strange. Matthew has none; Mark but one.—But to whom are the words of this command addressed? To *angels*, would be the answer I should make; because, throughout the book, angels are the executioners of divine justice. The helpless and fugitive Christians, who just before are addressed, cannot well be supposed to be here charged with the execution of the present order.

(7) In such measure as she hath boasted herself and indulged in revelling, in the same measure repay her with torment and mourning; for she saith in her heart: I sit as queen, I am no widow, nor shall I see any cause of mourning.

The *ἐδόξασε ἑαυτήν* seems to be exemplified in her saying: *I sit as queen*, i. e. sit firmly established as queen, *κάθημαι* = יָשַׁבְתִּי or יֹשֶׁבֶת. —*Χήρα*, lit. *bereaved*, is usually applied to a *widow*, i. e. a woman who has lost her husband. But it is not of necessity limited to this; and here it probably points to a bereavement of children. The city is the mother, the inhabitants her children. So the sentiment is: 'I shall never become depopulated, and therefore shall not be called to mourn!'

(8) Because of this, in one day shall her plagues come, death and mourning and famine; and she shall be burned up in the fire; for mighty is the Lord God, who hath judged her.

Διὰ τοῦτο, i. e. on account of her pride, her luxury, and her boast-

ing.—*In one day*, i. e. suddenly and unexpectedly; for all these evils are not wont to come simultaneously, and when the threat is uttered that they shall so come, it implies that they will come unexpectedly.—*Death*, i. e. the loss of inhabitants in various ways; *mourning*, i. e. bewailing on account of the numerous dead; *famine*, the usual accompaniment of a siege by a foreign enemy.—*She shall be consumed by fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has passed sentence upon her*, i. e. the power of him who has condemned her admits of no control and cannot be resisted; therefore, he who has condemned will execute his sentence. The consuming by fire was usual in ancient times, when a fortified city was captured. Here the expression presents the emblem of thorough destruction.

After this total destruction comes the LAMENT over her fall:

(9) And the kings of the earth shall weep and mourn on account of her, who committed fornication with her and revelled, when they shall see the smoke of her burning;

The confederate and tributary kings of the Roman empire are doubtless meant here, who were more usually creatures of the imperial government, and connected with it by many ties.—*Committed fornication*, i. e. became idolaters, or acceded to her idolatries.—*Revelled*, indulged (with her) in every kind of rioting and extravagance.

(10) Standing afar off for fear of her torment, they will say; Alas! alas! the great city Babylon, the mighty city! For in one hour thy doom has come.

Ἑστηκότες and λέγοντες may be taken as in apposition with the Nom. to κλαύσουσι and κόψονται; or we may mentally combine the Fut. of εἰμί with one or both of these participles and employ them as verbs (which is common in the Apocalypse). In the translation above, I have rendered one of them as a verb; and this makes the sense more simple and perspicuous.—The burning of the city is so dreadful, that near approach cannot be made; hence, ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἑστηκότες.—*Torment* the destruction by fire may well be called.—Οὐαί, οὐαί, an interjection of the plur. form; there is also a singular form, viz. οὐά; so the Latin, *vah, vae!* Our English word *alas* is the best version here; for *woe* designates imprecation, which is not apposite here.—*Babylon, the mighty city*, is a repetition of the name with some variation, a repetition for the sake of intensity.—Μίᾳ ὥρᾳ, i. e. suddenly and unexpectedly. *Thy doom has come*, i. e. the judgment passed upon thee is immediately executed.*

* A peculiar circumstance in these lamentations deserves notice here. This is, that the favourite *trichotomy* of the author leads him to repeat οὐαί! οὐαί! ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη, at the end of each lament, see vs. 10, 16, 19; as also the μίᾳ ὥρᾳ

(11) And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her; because no one any longer purchases their merchandize.

The merchants appear to be more concerned for the fate of Babylon than the kings; for they were more profited by her commerce and luxury, than any other class of people. This trait of the lamentation, however, can hardly be made to correspond to anything in the actual history of the destruction of pagan and antichristian Rome, as a *spiritual* adversary. The merchants, literally considered, were not more inclined to *paganism* than other classes of people. It must therefore be put to the account of *concinnity* in description, that this particular trait is introduced; I mean a concinnity which carries through the account of the destruction of great Babylon, consistently with the natural consequences of destroying a literal city. In other words, the congruity of the description belongs more to the symbol than to the thing designed to be signified. But it must be remembered, that in so doing the writer has heightened the beauty and force of his description; and this is a sufficient reason for his indulging in a particular recital of the leading objects of luxury and of commerce.—*Γόμον, lading*, lit. fulness, as it comes from *γέμω, to be full.* The secondary meaning is given in the version.

(12) The merchandize of gold and silver, and of precious stone and pearl, and of fine linen and purple, and of silk and scarlet; and all citron-wood and every ivory vessel, and all furniture of most costly wood, and brass, and iron, and marble.

That ancient Babylon was full of these things, and of others named in the sequel, there can be no doubt. As little doubt can remain, that Rome, in the first century of the Christian era, was equally full of them.—*Σηρικόν, silk*, was imported anciently from the East, probably from China; from which the name also was derived; see Klaproth and Abel Remusat in Journal Asiat. II. p. 243 seq. For the value put upon it, see Plin. Hist. Nat. VI. 17. 20.—*Θύϊνον*, adj. from *θύα, citron-tree.* The wood was highly prized for elegant furniture.—*Ξύλον . . . σκεῦος*, etc., in the Acc., being in apposition with *γόμον* above, and making here an *oratio variata*, when compared with the Genitives before.

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characterizing the sudden and unexpected coming of final destruction. Besides this, there is another trait of the style which deserves remark. This is, that in the first lament, the verbs introducing the narration of it stand in the Fut. tense; in the second, in the Present; in the third, in the Praeterite. It is thus that the author shows, amid all the excitement which the subject must have created while he was writing, that he is not inattentive to the call of aesthetics, as to *variety* in modes of expression.

(13) And cinnamon and fragrant spice, and incense and ointment and frankincense, and wine and oil, and fine flour and wheat, and cattle and sheep; and of horses and of mule-chariots, and of grooms; and also slaves.

Σεμίδαλις means *the best and finest kind of flour.*—*Ἵππων* and the other Gen. which follow, depend on *γόμον* implied.—*Ῥεδῶν* means a chariot drawn by mules; an article imported from Gaul into Rome, (Caes. Bell. Gall. I. 51), and adopted there as one of the luxuries.—*Σώματα*, lit. *bodies*; but the later Greeks made use of this word in a brachylogical way, viz. for *σώματα δοῦλα* or *αἰχμάλωτα*, so that when used alone it serves to indicate *slaves*. Vice versâ, the noun was often omitted, and the adjectives employed to indicate the same idea. But here, as the subsequent phrase also indicates *slaves*, I have, in order to avoid tautology, rendered it *grooms*, in connection (as it in fact is) with *ἵππων* and *ῥεδῶν*, i. e. it designates here a particular species of slaves employed in taking care of these.—*Καὶ ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων* = נֶפֶשׁ אָדָם in Ezek. 27: 13, which plainly means *slaves* or *human persons*. The Hebrew נֶפֶשׁ often designates the idea of *person* or *self*. The Acc. here is in apposition with *γόμον* above. The designation of *slave* is generic; and so I have translated it in the version above.

(14) And the fruit of thy soul's desire hath gone from thee, and all that is splendid and glittering hath perished out of thee; and thou shalt no more find them.

Ὀπώρα literally means the *latter part of summer*, i. e. the harvest time for fruits; so that under this general appellation seems to be comprised all manner of provision or sustinence brought into the great city. —*Λιπαρά* and *λαμπρά* characterize all kinds of furniture and clothing, which were gilt or plated or embroidered, and therefore were bright and splendid. The address here, in the *second* person, to the great city, has been a stumbling-block to many. Beza, Mark, Launaeus, Vitringa, Ewald, and others are perplexed by it; and the latter doubts its genuineness. But what is more usual than similar apostrophes in the Hebrew prophets? The ground of it is excitement in the mind of the writer, whose feelings lead him directly to address the haughty tyrant who is laid low; just as the inhabitants of the under-world do, when the king of Babylon descends to them, Is. 14: 10 seq. Comp. Is. 47: 1—3, and many other passages of the like tenor. The amount of it is, that the description, instead of moving on in the third person, and thus addressing the reader, assumes the second and directs its language to her, i. e. to Babylon, who was about to be reduced to the desolation here described. It is a species of composition which belongs to the *sarcastic*, and it greatly heightens the energy of the discourse.

(15) And the venders of these things, who have become rich by her, shall stand afar off, for fear of her torment, weeping and mourning;

Τούτων refers to the articles of traffic enumerated in the preceding context. The distant position for fear of participating in the torment, is the same here as in the case of the kings, v. 10 above.

(16) Saying: Alas! alas! The great city which clothed herself with fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned herself with gold and precious stones and pearls! For in one hour riches so great have been utterly laid waste.

The articles of clothing here mentioned are among the number already recounted as articles of traffic, in the preceding context. Here the most prominent are selected.—It is evident, that the whole recital of the various articles of splendour and luxury, is introduced here mainly for the purpose of adorning the picture and making it the more magnificent. Correspondences to each of these articles, in the spiritual meaning of the whole passage, will hardly be sought for by any one, excepting by him who is ignorant of the true nature and design of tropical and symbolical language.

(17, 18) And every pilot, and every coaster, and sailors, and whoever ply the sea, stood afar off, and when they beheld the smoke of her burning cried out, saying: What is like to the great city?

Κυβερνήτης, helmsman, he who guides or conducts a vessel; here it probably means the person whom we name *captain*.—*Ὁ ἐπὶ τόπον πλέων*, lit. *he who sails to place*, i. e. he who sails from one place to another along the coast, and does not go out to sea; and thus the expression designates the secondary class of sailors, or rather of sea-captains.—*Ναῦται, sailors*, in the common sense of the word, the *crews* of ships. —*Whoever ply the sea*, is a generic expression embracing all classes of sailors, whether in war-ships, merchantmen, or fishing vessels, etc.—*Ἔστησαν καὶ ἔκραζον*, the Praeterite, as is usual in the Hebrew prophets; see remarks in a Note under the Comm. on v. 10 above.—*Τίς ὁμοία, what* [city] *is like*, etc. Evidently *πόλις* is the adjunct to *τίς*, and as we have no distinctive fem. interrogative, we must, according to our idiom, translate by *what*, i. e. what city; for if we translate by *who* (which designates *person*) the comparison would be incongruous.

(19) And they cast dust upon their heads, and weeping and mourning cried out, saying: Alas! alas! The great city in which all became rich who possessed ships in the sea, by reason of her magnificence! for in one hour hath she become desolate.

Cast dust upon their heads; such was the usual custom in ancient times, in token of affliction and commiseration; comp. Job 2: 12.—*By reason of her magnificence* or *splendour*, an epexegetical clause

designed to disclose more fully the meaning of ἐν ᾗ ἐπλούτησαν. The writer means to designate the splendour and magnificence of buildings, furniture, dress, equipage, etc., which made a great demand for articles imported by sea from foreign countries.

(20) Exult over her, thou heaven, and ye saints and apostles and prophets! for God has condemned your condemnation by her.

A strong antithesis, indeed, to the preceding lamentation and wailing. In that commiseration, the friends of God and the church can have no community of feeling. On the contrary, they have every reason to rejoice, that the church is freed from her most bitter and powerful enemy. If it be objected, that this exultation is contrary to the spirit of Christian love and compassion; the answer is, that neither God himself, nor any who bear his image, have any pleasure in the death of the sinner in itself considered. It is indeed altogether opposed to the spirit of benevolence, to indulge a thirst of *vengeance*, according to the present meaning given by us to that word. But it is not inconsistent with universal benevolence in its true and highest sense, to execute justice where there is refusal to repent, and the offer of mercy is treated with scorn. It is proper to rejoice, yea to exult, in the deliverance of the good from the oppression of the evil; to rejoice that the purposes of divine mercy are not thwarted, but are to be fully accomplished in the salvation of the righteous. An appeal, in proof of this, may be made to every man's spontaneous feelings in a land of light and liberty. He is glad when the midnight assassin is detected and brought to justice. He is glad that honest and peaceable citizens are rendered secure in their persons and estates; and all this without any vindictive feelings toward the criminal who has perilled them, and who meets at last with his due reward. In a sense like to this, we may well suppose the inhabitants of heaven are called upon to rejoice at the fall of Babylon.

Thou heaven, i. e. ye inhabitants of the heavenly world, as the next clause shows.—*Saints* here means the mass of common Christians, who had suffered by persecution.—*Apostles* means, in the N. Testament, not the *twelve* only, but other very distinguished leaders and teachers; Acts 14: 4, 14. Rom. 16: 7. 1 Cor. 12: 28. 2 Cor. 8: 23. However, as some of the twelve apostles had suffered martyrdom when the Apocalypse was written, (James certainly, and not improbably Peter and Paul), there is no serious objection to understanding the word *apostles* here in the more limited sense.—Προφῆται designates all distinguished teachers; see 1 Cor. 14: 1—5.—Ἔκρινε . . . τὸ κρίμα ὑμῶν, a paronomasia, which is imitated in the version. The meaning is, that God *punished* (the secondary sense of κρίνω) Babylon, on account of the condemnation or punishment which Christians had received ἐξ αὐτῆς, *from her*,

i. e. from great Babylon; ἐξ denotes the source whence the condemnation of Christians had come.

Thus ends the Lament, or second part of the chapter before us. It is proper, therefore, in this place, to advert for a moment to the prototype or exemplar of this in the Old Testament. It strikes one at first as somewhat strange, inasmuch as neither ancient Babylon nor Rome was ever remarkable in any considerable degree for *maritime* trade, that so much prominence should here be given to the class of men "who ply the sea," as mourners over the fall of the great city. Babylon and Rome were both at some distance from the sea, and could neither of them be called sea-port towns in any tolerable sense of the word. But it should be remembered, however, that both of them were at no great distance from seaports; both were on rivers navigable by small craft and lighters; and both carried on the importation of foreign luxuries to such an extent as rendered necessary the employment of much shipping. Still, in Is. xiii. xiv, and in Jer. l. li, nothing of consequence is said about the *maritime* concerns of ancient Babylon. The prototype of John, in regard to vs. 11—20, must therefore be looked for in Ezek. xxvii. xxviii. There, indeed, it may be found; and in it is exhibited a more than usual similarity to the apocalyptic passage now before us. The luxuriating description of Tyre, with its commerce and its wares and its ships, has no parallel in the Old Testament, and none in the New, excepting the passage under consideration. In applying so much of the *maritime* to Rome, the Apocalyptist has shown, that he does not expect his readers to make out a *literal* meaning from his language, but to regard the whole as designed merely to set forth the greatness and variety of the wealth and luxury and voluptuousness of the persecuting city, and in connection with this, her arrogance and insolence. It is indeed a vivid picture; and if the writer has dwelt longer upon the *maritime* part, and made it more prominent than we might expect, (for we should, *a priori*, hardly expect the trading seamen to be distinguished from the *merchants*), we must attribute this to the freedom of his glowing imagination, and to the evident design he had of being understood as describing, in a graphic way, the greatness and extent of luxury and extravagance.

THE RENEWED SENTENCE AGAINST BABYLON: CHAP. XVIII: 21—24.

The third or last part of the subordinate *trichotomy* now follows. It consists of a repetition of the sentence threatening utter destruction; and so it is an intense confirmation of it, first by symbol, and then by direct words.

(21) And a mighty angel took up a stone, like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying: Thus shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down with violence, and shall be found no more.

Εἷς = *τίς*, as elsewhere; so אֶחָד in the O. Testament.—*Ἰσχυρός*, *powerful* in a kind of physical sense here; which is appropriate to the sequel.—*Μύλον μέγαν* is not to be compared with millstones among us,

but with those which were contained in the hand-mills of the ancients. —*Ἔβαλεν*, i. e. with *αὐτόν* implied. The action of *casting down* is here designated.—*Ὁρμήματι*, *with violence* or *impetus*, alluding to the impetus with which the angel had cast the great stone into the sea.—*Shall be found no more*, is a necessary sequel of the image followed out; for a stone cast into the deep sea can no more be found. The sentiment is not, that Babylon shall be literally sunk in the ocean, but that, as a stone sunk in the ocean will never be seen again, so Babylon will fall to rise no more. The prototype of this symbol may be found in Jer. 51: 63, 64.

(22) And the voice of harpers and singers and pipers and trumpeters shall no more be heard in thee, and artificers of every kind shall be found in thee no more, and the noise of the millstone shall be heard in thee no more;

Κιθαρῳδῶν means those who play on the harp and accompany it with singing.—*Μουσικῶν*, *musicians* in general, but here, as distinguished from the others named, *singers*.—*Αὐλητῶν*, *fluters*, *pipers*.—Only the leading and favourite kinds of music are here mentioned, and as representatives of all the rest.—*Πᾶς τεχνίτης πάσης τέχνης*, lit. *every artificer of every art;* but I have expressed the sense in the version, more conformably to our English idiom. Such artificers are probably meant, as were employed in fabricating articles of luxury.—*Φωνὴ μύλου*, lit. *the voice of the millstone;* for the Greek did not distinguish, with the same accuracy of language as the English, *voice* from *noise*, the former being an articulate, the latter an inarticulate, sound.

Thus much for a vivid picture of the pleasures and employments of the great city by *day;* now comes a like description of its state by *night*.

(23) And the light of the candle shall no more shine in thee, and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard in thee no more; for thy merchants were the nobles of the earth; for by thy sorcery all the nations were led astray.

Λύχνου is here to be taken generically, as indicating every kind of light kindled in order to dissipate the darkness of evening.—*The voice of the bridegroom and of the bride*, i. e. the merry voice of those who walk in a wedding procession through the streets; as anciently was, and still is, the custom of the East, comp. Matt. 25: 6, 7.—*Thy merchants were the nobles of the earth*, i. e. thy merchants (such was thine excessive indulgence in luxury) became noblemen, q. d. very wealthy and distinguished for splendour of living.—*For by thy sorcery*, *φαρμακείᾳ*, *pharmacy*, lit. medicine. The meaning here is, portions given in the way of enchantment or for *charming*, as the older English has it. This, like the *inflammatory cup* so often mentioned, is of course not to be literally taken, but tropically. The effect of the charm was to *lead*

astray, i. e, lead into polytheism and idolatry.—The two last clauses are separate and *coördinate* reasons for the ruin that had just been predicted. I have translated and pointed them accordingly. The prototype of vs. 22, 23, may be found in Jer. 25: 10. 7: 34. 16: 9. 33: 10, 11. Ezek. 26: 13. Amos 6: 5—7. Is. 24: 8—10; comp. 1 Macc. 1: 45.

That a most vivid picture is here given of the employments, luxury, amusements, and splendour of the great city, will be readily conceded. But it is an offence against the taste of some, that οὐ . . . ἔτι is so often repeated. Yet they should call to mind, that here is the final denunciation of all that still remains of the great city, and that the *seven* times repetition of οὐ . . . ἔτι is in conformity with the use of the number *seven* in this book, as often adverted to before. On other ground, it might be somewhat difficult to solve the aesthetical problem presented here.

(24) And in her has been found the blood of prophets and saints, even of all who are slain on the earth.

To render the sentiment and connection more plain, vs. 23, 24, should be united. Καί at the beginning of v. 24 introduces a third ground or reason of the destruction, and the ὅτι of the preceding clause is implied before it.

FINAL VICTORY: CHAP. XIX.

[The time now draws near for the *final* termination of the conflict. The irrevocable doom has been pronounced. But before the final consummation, the episode (so usual in this book) of praise, thanksgiving, and anticipated completion of victory, comes in, with a delay (grateful in itself to the reader) of the main action. Comp. 5: 8 seq. 7: 9 seq. 11: 15 seq. It is by episodes of this nature, adapted to cheer the spirits of the suffering Christians, that the writer brings about the *morae* or *delays* in the main action of his piece. How much more relevant these episodes are to the main object, than those frequently to be met with in Epopees, the reader can easily judge.

In the present episode, *trichotomy*, as usual, is plainly discernible. In the first division, all the inhabitants of the heavenly world are represented as uniting in a song of triumph and of thanksgiving, on account of the righteous judgments of God which are about to be inflicted; vs. 1—4. In the second, a voice from the throne in heaven speaks, and requires of all his servants everywhere renewed praise, which accordingly is shouted; vs. 5—8. In the third, the glorious prospect for suffering martyrs is disclosed. They will be guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb; the church is indeed the Lamb's Bride; and the exaltation of the Messiah is vividly sketched in the declaration of the angel-interpreter, at whose feet John in a state of astonishment falls. Jesus, the angel declares, is the object of worship by him; and therefore he (the angel) cannot claim the worship of his fellow servants, who, like him, are merely instruments in making known the prophecies respecting the triumph of redeeming grace, vs. 9, 10.]

(1) After these things, I heard as it were a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying: Halleluia! the salvation, and glory, and power of our God!

Great multitude, i. e. the united hosts of heaven, as the sequel shows. —*Λεγόντων*, plur. in reference to the noun of multitude, *ὄχλου*.—*Halleluia*, i. e. praise Jehovah = הַלְלוּיָהּ.—*The salvation and glory and power*, triplex again; *καὶ ἡ τιμή*, of the vulgate text, is ejected. *Salvation* means deliverance of the church from its enemies.—*Δόξα* seems here to designate the divine attribute of *majesty*.—*Δύναμις*, *power*, has reference to God's omnipotence, as exerted in the overthrow of the enemies of the church. The sentence is brachylogical. The meaning is, that deliverance from enemies, and majesty, and might, are to be ascribed to God, and he is to be praised on account of them. The article before the nouns points to the specific deliverance, etc., indicated by the preceding context.

(2) For true and righteous are his judgments; because he hath punished the great whore, who corrupted the earth by her fornication; and he hath avenged the blood of his servants [shed] by her hand.

True, *ἀληθιναί*, means faithful to promises.—*Δίκαιαι*, *just* in the way of retribution.—*Corrupted the earth* here refers to the wide-spread moral corruption which Rome had occasioned, by her heathenish worship. —*He* hath avenged, i. e. God hath avenged.—*By her hand* is brachylogical; for the meaning is, *blood shed by her hand*, *ἐκ* marking the cause or instrument, as often elsewhere.

(3) And again they said: Halleluia! And her smoke riseth up forever and ever.

The original imagery is taken from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha. As they had already become a perpetual desolation, so should spiritual Babylon be. The same is indicated by the prediction in 14: 11, comp. 18: 9.—*Ἀναβαίνει*, Pres. tense, indicates action continuing and to be continued.

(4) And the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures, fell down and worshipped God who sitteth on the throne, saying: Amen! Halleluia!

The writer means to say, that not only the inhabitants of the heavenly world in general, but even the most exalted among them, united in praise and thanksgiving on account of the execution of God's justice on persecuting Babylon; comp. 5: 14. 7: 11. Thus we have the Halleluia *thrice* repeated, and confirmed by the solemn *Amen*. In addition to this, all is confirmed by a voice from the throne of God.

(5) And a voice came from the throne, saying: Praise our God, ye his servants, and ye who fear him small and great!

That this is the voice of the Messiah, sitting upon the throne, is clear

from the phrase: Praise *our* God. There is nothing singular in this; comp. John 20: 17, "I ascend to *my* Father and your Father, to *my* God and your God." See also Heb. 2: 11 seq. and Rev. 18: 4.—*Ye who fear him*, etc., merely expands and renders prominent the idea of δοῦλοι. Thus does the great Captain of salvation assent to and confirm the rejoicing of his followers. Encouraged and stimulated by this, they break out into a renewed expression of joy and praise:

(6) And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunder, saying: Halleluia! for the Lord our God, the Almighty, has become king.

The difference between saying ἤκουσα ὡς φωνήν, and ἤκουσα φωνήν, etc., is slight, but yet perceptible. The first formula does not make direct affirmation respecting the multitude or great numbers who shout, but merely *implies* such a multitude, because the noise is like that of a mighty host; the second formula would directly assert that there was a great multitude. The basis of the expression is, the noise made by the shout of a mighty and victorious army.—*Noise of many waters*, i. e. of the waves of the sea, in a tempest, rolling upon the shore.—*Loud* or *mighty thunder* is another familiar and sublime comparison. The *triplex* repetition of this imagery is for the purposes of intensity, like the triplex Halleluia in the preceding context. Thus the repetition of the Halleluia, after the approbation from the throne, becomes greatly augmented; as was perfectly natural.—Ἐβασίλευσε, *has become* or *acted as king*, i. e. universal king, his enemies being subdued; or we may translate it, as is usual, *has reigned*, where the Aor. is employed in order to denote the certainty of his complete and universal reign, Gramm. § 136. 5. *d.*

(7) Let us rejoice, and be glad, and give glory to him; for the marriage of the Lamb hath come, and his Wife hath prepared herself.

The joy, then, is not so much over the fallen enemy, as over the prospects and privileges of the church, which are now rendered bright and cheering. The boldness of the imagery here is striking; yet it is nothing new. Everywhere in the prophets of the O. Testament, God is often represented as the *husband* of Israel or Judah; an image derived from two sources, first, from the fact that a nation is usually personified under the image of a *female*, and secondly, that the connection between husband and wife is the dearest and most sacred of all; Gen. 2: 24. The wife is, by her very relation to her husband, bound to faithfulness, purity, obedience, and affection; the husband is to protect, provide for, and cherish the wife. Hence the frequency of this imagery in the O. Testament; e. g. Is. 50: 1. 54: 5. Jer. 3: 14. Is. 62: 5. Hos. 2: 19, 20. The whole of Canticles exhibits this idea greatly enlarged and as it were individualized, if it is to be understood in a spiritual

sense. It is frequent also in the N. Testament; e. g. 2 Cor. 11: 2. Eph. 5: 22—32. Rev. 21: 2, et al. Undoubtedly we may call such imagery *oriental;* for the poems of Hafiz among the Persians, and many of the religious poems of the Arabians, assume the same imagery, in order to express the ardour and purity of affection which is due to God. If any reader is offended at this, it is but the part of candour to suggest, that the Bible was written *in the East*, and *for the East* as well as the West; and surely in oriental countries no one would think at taking offence on the ground of tropical language derived from such a source.—Besides, Rome has already been repeatedly introduced as a harlot, in a gaudy and meretricious dress; the church therefore is introduced here, on the contrary, as a chaste virgin betrothed to Christ. The antithesis between the two is thus made striking.—*Ἡτοίμασεν ἑαυτήν, hath adorned herself* for the nuptials; as the sequel shows.

(8) And it was given her, that she should put on fine linen, splendid and pure; (for the fine linen signifies the righteousness of the saints).

The bridal garment here mentioned, considered in a literal respect, is such as was wont to be worn at nuptials. But the writer explicitly tells us, that all literal and carnal explanation is to be forborne. The fine linen, as he declares, is only a symbol of *the righteousness of the saints.* In Greek the word *righteousness* is plural, *δικαιώματα*, for the sake of intensity. This plainly does not designate the good deeds and virtuous actions, simply or principally, of the saints; for it is something *given* to them. Paul presents us with a solution: "That I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is by faith in Christ, the righteousness of God by faith," Phil. 3: 9. So then, 'clothed in the righteousness of Christ,' saints are to be affianced to him when their highest spiritual union with him shall be completed. All that is here said, is said for the sake of pointing out the reward which awaits Christians in the world to come. So the sequel shows:

(9) And he saith to me: Write; Blessed are they who are bidden to the marriage-supper of the Lamb! He also saith to me: These are the true words of God.

See a similar passage in 3: 20, in respect to Christ's *supping with* the believer. There seems, at first sight, to be a departure here from the imagery of the preceding verse. There the whole church are represented as the *bride*, and Christ as the Husband. Here the blessedness is mentioned of those who are *guests invited* to the wedding-feast. I know not well how to solve this, except by the consideration, that the speaker here regards the consummation of the marriage, i. e. the highest spiritual union with Christ in the heavenly world, after martyr-

dom, as constituting the basis of his imagery in v. 8; while in v. 9, he pronounces a blessing on those, who, *having been called of God*, are now in their probationary state, preparing for a final union with Christ. Understood in this way, the speaker declares that blessings of the highest kind await martyrs in the heavenly world; also, that they who have merely begun their course, and who are invited to final happiness, are, amid all their trials, to be counted as greatly blessed.

The earnestness with which the author speaks, is designated by the declaration, *these words of God are true.*—The Nom. case or subject of *λέγει* is not mentioned by John. But there can scarcely be a doubt, that the angel-interpreter, who seems everywhere to accompany him, is meant to be considered as the subject. So v. 10 leads us of necessity to explain the matter here.

The idea of a *feast*, as an image of the happiness of heaven, was a familiar one with the Jews; see and comp. Luke 14: 15. 16: 23, Lazarus reclining with Abraham at the table. Luke 22: 16. Mark 14: 25. Rev. 22: 1, 2. The imagery here can scarcely be misunderstood by an intelligent and sober mind.

(10) And I fell at his feet to worship him; then he saith to me: See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God: (for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy).

John, enraptured with what he had just seen and heard, seems almost to have lost, in amazement and ecstasy, a consciousness of what he was doing. His first emotions lead him to fall at the feet of the angel-interpreter as an act of homage, doubtless believing that the Lord Jesus himself was veiled in the form of the angel. But while he was proceeding to do so, the angel arrests him with admonitions, that he himself is nothing more than a ministerial servant, and therefore cannot be a proper object of homage.

Fell down, etc., the usual external act of homage, either to God or man. In *western* countries, *kneeling* is the act of homage; in the *eastern*, prostration of the whole person on the ground, with the face in the dust, was the usual token of civil or spiritual reverence. That John was about to pay the latter, seems probable from the check which the angel gave him.—*Ὅρα μή*, brachylogy, i. e. it plainly stands for *ὅρα μὴ προσκυνήσῃς*. Our own idiom, without repeating the main verb, is, by the aid of the helping verb *do*, more explicit than the Greek; e. g. 'See thou *do* it not.'—*Σύνδουλός σου* is very expressive here, q. d. *I am a servant as well as thou*, and therefore cannot receive homage.—*Τῶν ἀδελφῶν* has for its preceding and governing noun *σύνδουλος* implied. The sum of the two clauses is: 'I am a fellow-servant of John and of all who testify for Christ.' *Those who hold the testimony of Jesus*, must

here have reference to *teachers* or *prophets*, i. e. to those who in some way or other held and proclaimed the gospel. The angel means to say, that he was engaged in the same business as John himself, and acted (like him) in a subordinate capacity. How comes it that Jesus, if merely human, never checked any of his worshippers in this way?

For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, is a clause that has been a kind of *crux interpretum*. Storr: Quicquid Jesus in hoc oraculo exposuit, e spiritu prophetico manavit. Ewald: Nam professio Jesu est spiritus propheticus, i. e. si quis fidem ejus constanter tuetur, is eo ipso spiritum habet propheticum. Neither to the purpose of the speaker, which is, to proffer a reason why the angel considers himself as nothing more than a *fellow-servant*. And what is that reason? Plainly it is this, viz. that John and his other fellow-witnesses for Jesus, being in possession of the testimony respecting him, were partakers of the spirit of prophecy, because the testimony respecting Jesus, in its full extent, must embrace many things yet future, and which could be known only in a prophetic way. Now inasmuch as the angel-interpreter came merely to aid John in the business of prediction or prophecy, he belongs to the same general class of ministerial agents as John himself. In other words: John and his coadjutor are both sent on the same errand, are engaged in the same business, and are partakers of the same prophetic spirit. The one, therefore, cannot worship the other. For substance, Vitringa and Heinrichs defend the like exegesis. I do not see that the passage fairly admits of any other.

FINAL CONTEST: CHAP. XIX. 11—21.

[The shout of anticipated victory being thus raised, and the glorious rewards of martyrdom being reassured, all is ready for the final catastrophe. This the remaining part of the chapter discloses. The usual *trichotomy* again develops itself in this. (1) The appearance of the great Captain of Salvation, with his hosts around him, from the heavenly world; vs. 11—16. (2) The proclamation made to the ravenous beasts and birds to come and glut themselves with the slaughtered; vs. 17, 18. (3) The final overthrow and excision of the beast, the false prophet, and their army; vs. 19—21].

(11) And I saw heaven opened, and behold! a white horse, and he who sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and he judgeth and maketh war with justice.

Heaven is here represented as being *opened*, for the inspection of the seer, and because *the armies of heaven* (v. 14) are to advance to the contest, issuing from the heavenly world.—*And lo! a white horse*, the emblem at once of the majesty of the rider, and of the victory to be achieved; see on 6: 2.—The personage designated as Leader, is not

here designated by his proper name (Jesus, Messiah), but by epithets which are expressive of the qualities which he manifests, particularly in his present undertaking. *Faithful*, viz. to all the promises which he has made to his followers. *True*, viz. to keep and execute both promises and threatenings. *And he judgeth and maketh war with justice*, i. e. he is not more true and faithful to his friends and followers, than he is *just* toward his enemies. He does not come forth in hostile array against them to cut them off, without good and sufficient reason grounded in the principles of justice and equity; for they have shed the blood of saints and martyrs without cause, and they deserve the punishment to be inflicted.—The construction begun with a participle (*καλούμενος*), and continued by a verb (*κρίνει* etc.), is not unusual; see Gramm. § 195. 3; (for *particle* in the Gramm. read *participle*).

(12) And his eyes were like a flame of fire, and on his head were many diadems; he had a name inscribed, which no one knew but himself.

Eyes as a flame of fire, i. e. emitting flashes of splendour; see on 1: 14.—*Many diadems*, because he is *King of kings and Lord of lords*, v. 16. The beast (13: 1) is represented as having *ten* diadems; here the number is not limited but is *πολλά*, because his superiority over all others is to be indicated.—*Ἔχων*, i. e. *ἦν ἔχων*, *he had*, see on 1: 16.—*Name inscribed*, i. e. inscribed on the frontlet of his diadem; see on 2: 17.—*Which no one knew but himself*, i. e. the secret incommunicable name of יְהֹוָה (or perhaps *Λόγος*), a name the full meaning of which is known only to God and his *σύνθρονος*, the Messiah; see on 2: 17. In this latter passage (2: 17), the name is said to be known only *to him who wears it*, i. e. all other men are excluded from a knowledge of its meaning; just as the high priest alone could pronounce the name on his mitre. But the wearing of such a diadem is the privilege of saints in glory, not of saints in the present world. In the state of glory it will be fully revealed to them what this name means. But in the case before us, the name in question belongs to the *imperial* diadem only; and of course he who wears such a diadem fully knows its proper meaning. Now as only the Messiah can wear this diadem, in the peculiar sense here meant, he only knows its full import. Is he not placed here on an equality with the Father? At all events, he is represented as fully his Vicegerent.

(13) And he was clothed in a garment dyed with blood; and his name was called: THE WORD OF GOD.

The prototype of *garment dipped* or *dyed in blood*, is in Is. 63: 1—3, where the great Deliverer comes up from Edom, his garments being stained with the blood of enemies. So here, the *red garment*, (for this I take to be the real meaning of the expression), is a symbol of the slaughter which was to ensue.—*His name is called* = his name is.—THE

WORD OF GOD, a name found elsewhere in the N. Testament only in the writings of the apostle John. The proof arising from this, that John the apostle must have written the Apocalypse, is not absolutely certain; for some of John's friends or readers may have adopted his phraseology. But still, the kind of appeal which the writer has here made to this new and peculiar appellation of the Messiah, seems at least to be quite *Johannean.*

As to the original reason for giving such an appellation to the Messiah; after all that has been written on this subject, it might seem presumptuous in me, to express an opinion in a single sentence, which is all that my present limits allow. *Speech* is the development of one's mind, wish, intention, command, etc.; and so it is a disclosure of the internal self. In respect to God, "he speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast." By the *word* of the Lord were the heavens made." Now inasmuch as Christ was "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his substance," "God manifest in the flesh," so he is the most direct, full, and immediate development of the Godhead to man; God *speaks* to us in and by him. Through him he speaks out as it were himself. So then, as Christ was the most immediate and distinguished manifestation of God to men, the most honoured means of communication, and because he was also the agent in creating the world, which is in like manner ascribed to the *word* of God, he received from John the name of *Λόγος*, or the great executor and communicator of the will of God. The context in John 1: 1—18, shows that the predominating ideas respecting *Logos* were such, in the writer's mind, as I have now developed. To defend the sentiment of these hints, would be foreign to my present business. The proper place for this is in a Comm. or in a monogram, upon John 1: 1.

(14) And the armies of heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed with white pure linen.

Upon white horses, the emblems of victory; see on v. 11. They are represented as being upon *horses*, because troops of this kind held quite the highest rank, and exhibited the greatest efficiency, in ancient times. New modes of warfare among us have somewhat altered the relations of cavalry to footmen.—*Clothed in white pure linen*, the emblem of admission to the happiness of the blessed; comp. 3: 5. This description seems to comprise saints or the redeemed in the army of the Redeemer, (comp. Rev. 3: 3. 2: 26, 27); but it does not exclude angels.

(15) And out of his mouth issueth a sharp sword, that he may smite the nations therewith: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierce anger of almighty God.

Sword of his mouth; see on 1: 16. 2: 12. The image seems to be,

that the threats which he utters, assume an *ensiform* appearance as they issue from his mouth; of course they are striking symbols of excision.—*Τὰ ἔθνη* here means the *heathen* nations contending against Christ.—*Rule with a rod of iron* means to rule with a sway which is irresistible, and which threatens entire destruction to all opposers. The prototype is in Ps. 2: 9.—*Treadeth the wine-press of the fierce wrath of almighty God;* see the original image in Is. 63: 1—3. On the nature of the imagery, see remarks on 14: 19, 20. *Wine-press of fierce wrath* symbolizes the idea, that the enemies of God are to be trodden down like grapes in the wine-press, and that their blood shall flow as freely as the juice of the grape which is expressed by treading.

(16) And he hath upon his vesture, even upon his thigh, a name inscribed: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Inscriptions on the outer garments of distinguished individuals were not unusual in ancient times, and they were made with large and resplendent letters; see Herod. II. 106. Cic. Verr. IV. 23. Le Moyne ad Jer. 23: 6. Münter Diss. ad Apoc. 17: 5. p. 2. Ewald, p. 292.—*Ὄνομα*, adopted by Griesbach and followed by Knapp and Hahn, instead of the vulgate *τὸ ὄνομα*, is an alteration plainly for the worse. The *article* is appropriate; and the writer of this book shows no particular deficiency in his knowledge of the article.—*King of kings*, i. e. Supreme King and Lord. The appropriateness of the titles here is manifest, inasmuch as his contest is with the kings of the earth. The inscription on his vesture means, that 'He is and must be universal king.'—It seems that the prophet saw, in vision, the great Leader of the army as sitting upon the white horse (v. 11), in which position the name on his thigh would be specially conspicuous.

Complete and final victory is now expected with so much certainty, that the whole army of the enemy are seen in anticipation as lying dead upon the field of battle, and the ravenous birds are summoned to devour their carcasses. This summons constitutes the second part of the *trichotomy*, in the closing scene.

(17) And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in mid-air: Come, gather yourselves together to the great feast of God.

The imagery here employed respecting the birds of prey, is very common among the Greeks and in the Heb. Scriptures. The first paragraph of the Iliad presents it; and it may be found in Is. 18: 6. 56: 9. Jer. 7: 33. 12: 9. 1 Sam. 17: 46, and particularly and at great length in Ezek. 39: 4—20, which is doubtless the model of the passage before us. The *personification* of the birds here, (who are addressed as intelligent beings), is too common in poetry to need explanation.—*Δεῦτε*,

lit. *supper*, but as it was the principal meal in the East, it often means *feast, convivium.*—*Great feast of God*, great by reason of the number of victims slain.—*Of God*, because God has ordained it, and makes provision for it.

(18) That ye may devour flesh of kings, and flesh of rulers of thousands, and flesh of the mighty, and flesh of horses and of those who sit upon them, and flesh of all freemen and of slaves, both small and great.

See the like method of enumerating all classes of men, in 6: 15. 13: 16.—The plur. σάρκας is not without significancy here, inasmuch as it points to a large aggregate. The *kings* are those confederate with the beast; comp. 17: 12—18. *Chiliarchs* are the military leaders in the army; ἰσχυρῶν comprises the robust soldiery.—Ἵππων, etc., means the cavalry.—*Freemen and slaves* comprise the *tout ensemble* of the army, i. e. the soldiers (including their officers) and all the menials of the camp.—*Small and great*, i. e. of all ages and conditions.—As the *Acc.* here follows φάγητε, it denotes, as I have rendered it, *to devour*, i. e. to eat up, as we express it. The Gen. (σάρκων) would denote only that some portion was to be eaten. The article is omitted before σάρκας, because the writer does not intend to be minutely specific.—That the vultures and other birds of prey, which usually attend the steps of armies in the East, are here meant, there can be no doubt. But the principal design of the imagery, after all, is to portray, in vivid colours, the disgraceful death of the followers of the beast. To lie unburied, and thus become the prey of ravenous birds or beasts, was regarded by the ancients with peculiar horror.

The consummation is now ushered in; for all is ready. Vs. 19—21 constitute the third part of the trichotomy.

(19) And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their assembled armies, make war with him who sat upon the horse, and with his army.

The assembling of the army has already been given, in 16: 13—16. *Make war* here means *to engage in battle.* The army encircling the victorious Leader is here presented to our view. But they act, after all, only a secondary part. The great Captain of Salvation is competent alone to achieve the victory.

(20) And the beast was seized; and with him the false prophet who wrought miracles before him, by which he led astray those who received the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image; alive were they both cast into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone.

In respect to ψευδοπροφήτης and ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, see on 13: 11, 12. The first step is to remove the leaders of the adverse army. The way in which they were taken, is not disclosed. To dwell on particulars consists not with the brevity here demanded. One might suppose, that

the prophet regarded them as having, champion-like, each proffered a contest with the "King of kings," and that thus they were apprehended. The beast and false prophet had been united in deceiving the nations and persecuting the church. Their doom is therefore the same. Both are cast *alive* into the lake of fire, i. e. Gehenna;—a touch of the pencil with a design to make the colouring intense. The aggravated and dreadful suffering which would result from being cast into the fiery pool in such a state, i. e. *alive*, is too intense for description. The burning of *dead* bodies, inflicts no pain; the burning of living ones implies pain indescribable. The idea of the writer moreover is, that they are to remain in the condition to which they are doomed, i. e. they are still to remain living—a fearful doom indeed; comp. Num. 16: 32—54. Is. 5: 14. The substantial meaning is, that the leaders in the persecution of Christians will be subjected to a speedy and dreadful punishment.

As to the expression *καιομένην ἐν τῷ θείῳ*, see on 14: 10.

(21) And the rest were slain by the sword of him who sat upon the horse, which issued from his mouth; and all the fowls were satiated with their flesh.

The army at large then is distinguished from their *leaders*, in respect to punishment. They are not cast *alive* into the pit. They are *slain* by the sword; not by the *literal* sword, however, for it is that which issues from the mouth of the great Leader, viz. his simple *word of excision*. This suffices to destroy the whole army in an instant. A magnificent description, indeed, of his power! No other effort or contest is needed.—The corpses fallen upon the field of battle are left to be devoured. There is none to bury them.—*Ἐχορτάσθησαν* literally means *to feed on herbs;* but this specific meaning not unfrequently goes into a generic one, as in our text, and then it designates the idea of being *fully fed*, of being *satiated*. The implication here of course is, that the army also go down to Hades; but not *alive*, like the beast and false prophet. The substantial meaning is, that condign punishment overtakes them, but not so dreadful as that of their leaders.

Ἐκ, by, with, common in such a sense, and used for the sake of pointing out with *distinctness* the sources from which the action denoted in the verb springs.

Thus ends the second part of this great drama; unless, indeed, we include what pertains to the punishment of the dragon, 20: 1—3. But we may regard this paragraph, perhaps, as constituting a kind of *transition* to a view of the subsequent condition of the church, which follows the second great overthrow of her enemies. In this case, we may consider chap. xx—xxii. 5, as comprising the *third* part of the subordinate trichotomy which is evidently made in the body of the work, or the main topic of the book.

Remarks on the application of Chap. xiii—xix.

It is proper now to look back, and inquire whether the author designed that chap. xiii—xix, should be regarded as applicable only to Nero, and its fulfilment as entirely accomplished by the death of Nero?

That Nero is mainly characterized in xiii. xvi. xvii, we cannot well doubt. But in chap. xiii, when the beast out of the sea is first presented, he has *seven heads*, and each of these is itself a king or emperor, 17: 10. Of course, the beast, *generically considered*, represents many kings, not merely one. Yet as the reigning emperor, for the time being, is the actual manifestation of the beast, or the actual development of it, so the word *beast* is applied, in the chapters named, mainly to Nero then persecuting the church. Insensibly almost, at least so it is to the reader, this specific meaning appears to be dropped, and the more generic one to be employed again in chap. xviii. seq. Chap. xvi. seems plainly to indicate the first great overthrow of the power of persecution. The *great city* and *the cities of the nations* are cloven by an earthquake and reduced to a ruinous state. Indeed such is the catastrophe here, that were nothing else said in the sequel, we should be ready to conclude, that this overthrow ends the dominion and sway of the beast. That Nero's fall was in the eye of the Apocalyptist here, I can hardly doubt. But this was *not* the end of the church's persecutions; although a respite of some twenty years or more was now given. Further persecutions were to arise; and so, a *continued* war with the beast, and a still further destruction of great Babylon, are brought in the sequel to our view.

If this, or something of this nature, be not the writer's design, why should he have made the second catastrophe to differ so much from the first? There, the earthquake, hail, thunder, etc., designate the *finale* of the overthrow. Not so here, but only the *commencement* of it.

That all the future historical facts respecting the persecution of the church lay open in detail before the mind of the seer, I find no satisfactory evidence. Nor does it seem to me probable. When we look back to the visions of Isaiah and other Hebrew prophets, we find them nearly always, when concerned with *distant future* events, to assume a *generic*, and not a specific form. So here. As soon as the writer dismisses the case of Nero from his consideration, he deals no longer with anything but generic representations. Persecutions will revive. The war will be still waged. At last the great Captain of Salvation will come forth, in all his power, and make an end of the long protracted war. Then, and not till then, will the millennial day of glory dawn upon the church.

To look now for specific individual facts in the history of the church, which are to correspond with the respective traits of this symbolical picture, would be the same thing, as to look for the specific events in the life of David, which correspond with Ps. 18: 7—16; or to busy one's self with searching for such events to correspond with the pictures drawn in Is. xiii. xiv. xxi. xl—lxvi; or by Zachariah in chap i—vi. Or, to present the matter in a somewhat different attitude, the same as to look for them in the phrases: "The Lord turneth the earth upside down—The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed—The stars of heaven fell unto the earth," and the

like. Common sense is ever wont to give the true meaning to such language, when particular favourite theories are out of the question; why not apply the same rule of interpretation to the Apocalypse?

In order to designate the final and certain overthrow of heathenism, as opposed to Christianity, the writer has chosen to represent the whole matter by the symbol of a great contest between the two parties. On the one side are arranged Satan, the civil power, and the heathen priesthood, with all their confederates; on the other is the great Head of the church, the angels, and the people of God. During the contest, the capitals of all heathen kings, i. e. of the beast and his confederates, are assaulted and reduced to a falling state; in its further progress, they sink to final ruin; and last of all comes the great battle between the main body of the assembled forces on both sides, which ends in the total destruction of the enemy. Nothing is more natural, now, than such a picture. But why should we be led to suppose, that a picture of this kind is designed to be a history in *detail* of great events predicted? Where else is this so, if we except, perhaps, the eleventh chapter of Daniel?—a specimen of prophecy by the way, which, as all must admit, is entirely *sui generis*. But there *symbol* is not employed.

It belongs to *the nature* of the symbolic representation before us, that it should have a progress and a final completion. And so it must be true of persecutions, that they will have their progress and their completion. But that they will terminate in a *literal* battle, for which all the heathen nations are assembled in one place, it is, in my apprehension, no part of the writer's design to signify. The great battle is an indispensable condition of the aesthetical perfection of the writer's composition and plan; and this belongs specially to his aesthetics. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean to say, that nothing historical is signified by this. I doubt not that the great truth taught is, that final, complete, and certain victory over heathenism will be achieved. But the *manner* of this battle and victory is, as I apprehend, no part of the writer's object. Whatever of this there seems to be, belongs merely to the *finish* of his composition and of his plan of symbolizing. To look for a specific and literal battle, as a fulfilment of chap. xix, would be like looking for individual facts in history as the fulfilment of the symbols indicated in chap. xiv, or in 18: 21—24, and in 19: 1—10. When will a matter so plain as this, become well understood and be fully believed? Then, I would answer, and only then, when men will cease from forming theories about prophecy *a priori*; from guessing, instead of philologizing; and from wandering into the regions of symbol and metaphor, without any pole-star or compass to guide their steps. The Apocalypse may be and will be well understood, when men have ceased to treat it as a syllabus of civil and ecclesiastical history.

As to the *time* when all will be accomplished which is symbolized in chap. xiii—xix, I must refer the reader to Exc. V. which treats of the subject of *time*, as designated in this book. The fall of the beast at the end of a time mentioned in 13: 5, I cannot doubt, is to be referred to Nero and his persecution; and it harmonizes almost to a week with the actual time during which Nero persecuted the church. Other limitation than this I do not see anywhere, in this second catastrophe. "The times and the seasons the Father has kept within his own power." Why should we believe, then, that John has been so prodigal in designating them in the Apocalypse, as many suppose?

Whenever the church volunteer as a body to serve in the army of their glorious Leader, then will the day of antemillennial victory be near at hand. There are signs that such a day is approaching. The Lord hasten it in his time!

THIRD CATASTROPHE AND SEQUEL: CHAP. XX. 1—XXII. 5.

[Having arrived at the end of the second catastrophe, we come now to the contemplation of the third and last. During this period the prosperity of the church is not only to be great, but for a long time without any considerable check or opposition. The era commences with the dethronement of Satan, the binding of him, and the casting of him into the great Abyss, the abode of demons or evil spirits when imprisoned; see Exc. I. II. 5. *a*. There he remains during one thousand years of the church's prosperity, which are to follow; 20: 1—3. All active opposition being thus removed, the era of the church's triumph of course is ushered in. Christ and the glorified martyrs reign undisturbed a thousand years; 20: 4—7. Then follows, upon the liberation of Satan, a new attempt to overthrow the church. Gog and Magog—the old enemies of the people of God (Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix.), roused up by Satan, advance to the holy land and city, in order to destroy it. They come in numbers like to the sand of the sea. It is not said of them, nor intimated, that they are *apostates* from the profession of the Christian faith. Evidently the writer introduces them and speaks of them *as never having professed to be the friends of Christ.* The glorious day of the church, then, had not yet dispelled *all* the darkness of the earth. Some distant, obscure, savage nations remain, as the enemies of the gospel. The very names which are given to them import thus much. But their efforts are all vain. Fire comes down from heaven and devours them. The contest is not as in former cases a protracted one. All the events of it, and its *exitus*, are related in only two verses. Their leader, Satan, is now taken and cast into the lake of fire, from which there is no escape, for it is no mere temporary prison like the abyss. And thus ends the third and last great contest; 20: 8—10.

In connection with this event the writer has disclosed the final consummation of the happiness of the church in a state of glory. The general judgment takes place. The righteous and the wicked are assigned to their final abodes. The awful condition of the wicked is portrayed in glowing colours; 20: 11—15. On the other hand, the final abode of the righteous is copiously described, and in a most vivid manner; 21: 1—22: 5. Then follows the epilogue; which concludes the book.

In respect to the *connection* which has often been supposed to exist between the overthrow of Gog and Magog and the end of the world with the general judgment, some remarks seem to be necessary. To argue that the end of the world will be *immediately after* this overthrow, would be quite unsafe. Whoever is conversant with the Hebrew prophets, must know that nothing is more common with them than to overlook all time that intervenes between events, and merely to describe the events themselves. Thus in cases too numerous to be particularized, the coming of the Messiah is connected (so far as continuity of discourse is concerned) immediately with the taking place of events, which happened centuries before his death. Thus Is. iii. threatens severe punishment to the oppressive and luxurious Jews of that day; while the sequel says: "In that day," (viz. when

this punishment shall be inflicted), "shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, etc.," and then spreads out into a striking Messianic prediction. With the punishment of ancient Judah and Israel (chap. vii. viii.), is immediately united one of the most graphic prophecies concerning the Messiah in all the O. Testament; Is. ix. 1—7. With a prediction of the invasion of the king of Assyria (chap. x), and its termination, is united another most notable Messianic prophecy, chap. xi. With the overthrow of Idumaea (chap. xxxiv.), is united a prophecy of Messianic time, xxxv. In the last part of the book, chap. xl—lxvi, the transition from the return out of the Babylonish exile, to the time of the Messiah, is to be found almost everywhere, and often in such a shape as if the one event stood immediately connected with the other. Ezekiel (ch. xxxvii.) unites the return from Babylon with the Messianic day. In the book of Daniel, the four great monarchies, viz. the Babylonish, the Persian, that of Alexander, and that of his successors in the vicinity of Palestine, are connected immediately with the coming of the Messiah, even by the expression: "*In the days of these kings*, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, etc." Dan. ii. The same thing is repeated in chap. vii. and again in chap. ix. The same is the case in other prophets; but these examples are sufficient.

As no one now can justly argue, that the Messianic period was immediately to follow the happening of events, with the description of which a Messianic prediction stands intimately connected, so no one can justly conclude, that the end of the world is *in point of time* immediately connected with the destruction of Gog and Magog. It would be contrary to the general plan of the book and to the nature of things. The writer's plan is most evidently *climactic*. This is natural to the human mind, and finds its correspondencies deeply rooted in the human breast. The Millennium is a peaceful and an almost universal reign of Christianity. Yet Gog and Magog are out of its domains, being "in the ends of the earth." After the final victory over them, what is there any more to oppose the church? Satan is thrust into the lake of fire, whence there is no return. The hostile nations are no more. Why then should not the triumph of the church be universal? It seems to follow of course; and it is consonant with the climactic nature of the composition as a whole, or rather, it is demanded by this.

But why has not the writer dwelt on this last period? The answer to this question may be found in the peculiar brevity which he prescribes to himself in this last part of the great drama. The events of a thousand years; the invasion by Gog and Magog, with their defeat; the ultimate confinement and punishment of Satan; and lastly the general judgment; are all crowded into the space of *twelve* verses. This shows that the very distant future is designed to be merely glanced at by the writer. So it is with the Hebrew prophets. But here, there is a special reason for brevity. The main object of writing the book is already accomplished, for substance. Christians have been consoled by assurances, that all the enemies with whom the church was then conflicting, would surely be overthrown. To complete an epic plan, which involves a climactic progression of events, and to gratify the taste and feelings, the last part of the book is added. It seems to be added mainly for this purpose. Mere touches and glances are all which it exhibits, or which were intended to be exhibited. The eye of hope is directed forward and sees the thousand years of uninterrupted prosperity; then the sudden destruction of a new and final enemy; and all the rest is left to joyful anticipation. When all clouds are swept from the face of the sky, why should not the sun shine forth in all his glory?

I cannot therefore doubt, that the setting sun of the church on earth, is to be in

a heaven of unclouded splendour. Peaceful and triumphant will be her latest age. The number of the redeemed will be augmented beyond all computation; and the promise made from the beginning, that "the Seed of the woman should bruise the Serpent's head," will be fulfilled in all its extent and with a divine plenitude of meaning. Is there not in every breast a kind of necessary anticipation, that such will be the triumphs of redeeming love and mercy?

That the writer should enlarge so much as he has done, in the two last chapters, in the description of the New Jerusalem and the final and glorified state of the church, falls entirely within his general plan. He set out to cheer despondING Christians, and animate all of them in the great contest that was going on, to fidelity, fortitude, and perseverance. How? By assurances of certain victory here, and of eternal crowns of glory hereafter. Often, in the course of the work, he opens heaven to the eye of faith, and makes it to see the glories there enjoyed. Often he repeats the most solemn assurances of *future* happiness. Why should he not close with a description of this, which would cause every heart to beat high with hope and joy, and fill the soul with such thrilling anticipations as would make the faithful followers of Christ regardless of persecution and distress? He might well do this; he has done it, and in a most effectual manner. No Eden can present any more than a faint resemblance of the picture which he has drawn. The understanding and pious reader closes the book with admiration, with wonder, with delight, with lofty anticipations of the future, and with undaunted resolution to follow on in the steps of those, who through faith and patience have inherited the promises and entered into everlasting rest.]

(1) And I saw an angel descending from heaven, having the key of the Abyss, and a great chain upon his hand.

The efforts and influence of Satan are henceforth, for a long time, to be at an end. He is to be confined where he can no more coöperate with the followers of the beast, until the church shall have enjoyed her long and peaceful sabbath.—*The key of the Abyss*, see on 1: 18. 9: 1, where the same image of a *gate* or *door* to the under-world is presented. The safe keeping of this is indicated, by the fact that an *angel* has charge of the key.—*A great chain on his hand*, the ἐπί here seeming to imply, that its magnitude was such that it could not be grasped, but lay *upon* the extended hand.—*Great* because of the strength of him who was to be bound.—As to the *abyss* as a place of confinement and punishment, see Exc. I. Part II. 5. *a*.

(2) And he laid hold of the dragon, the old serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.

The old serpent, in reference to the serpent who deceived Eve at the beginning, or else a mere paraphrase of δράκοντα. The latter, perhaps, is the more probable explanation here.—*Who is the devil and Satan*, i. e. who is the same being as he who is called the *devil*, etc. In Greek, the article is omitted before both the names here, as it may be before *proper* names, and also after verbs of *naming*; Gramm. § 80. 7. In our idiom, the article is necessary before *attributive* appellations,

and must be omitted before proper names for the most part.—*Διάβολος, the accuser*, viz. of the saints; Job 1: 2. *Satan* = שָׂטָן, *adversary*, the Hebrew name which corresponds somewhat nearly to the Greek *διάβολος*.—*Χίλια ἔτη*, Acc. of time how long. The great question whether this is to be taken *literally* or *symbolically*, is one that must be settled by the analogy of the book, in regard to specified periods. We have seen, that the famous period of three and a half years = forty-two months = 1260 days, is to be understood, in all probability, in its literal sense, not indeed with rigid arithmetical exactness, but as designating a period of moderate extent. Here, then, assuming a similar usage in respect to numbers, we may suppose that the *thousand years* are to be taken in their ordinary sense, or at least for a very long period. The latter idea is sufficient; and the general tone of the book might justify such a mode interpretation. The nature of the case also is such, that we may well suppose a very long period of rest would be assigned to the church. Some have made each day here the representative of a year, and have thus made out the Millennium to be a period of 360,000 years, or 365,000, as others reckon. See, on the subject of *time* here and elsewhere in the Apocalypse, Exc. V.

(3) And he cast him into the abyss, and locked it up, and put a seal upon it, that he might not any longer lead astray the nations, until the thousand years shall have been completed; after these he must be loosed for a little time.

The ancient custom of making sure that the prison door has not been opened, by putting a seal upon the lock, is made plain by Dan. 6: 17 and Matt. 27: 66.—*Ἐσφράγισεν ἐπάνω* expresses the impressing of the seal upon the lock of the door, not because it fastened the door or gate of itself, but because it prevented intrusion or any secret opening of it, without its becoming known. So Hebrew חָתַם עַל, Job 12: 14.—*Λυθῇ αὐτόν* indicates, that by divine permission or arrangement Satan would be loosed again, after the thousand years had expired. From the whole representation, here and elsewhere, it is plain that the Abyss is not the place of *final* punishment, but only of temporary restraint or chastisement. *The lake of fire* is the place of final torment, from which there is no escape; see 14: 10, 11. 19: 20. 20: 10, 14. Hades or the Abyss is at last to be cast into this lake, or merged in it by being added to it, 20: 14, i. e. the place of temporary punishment is to be destroyed, and only the *eternal* prison is to remain.

RESURRECTION OF THE MARTYRS: CHAP. XX. 4—6.

[Satan being thus effectually restrained, the era of the church's prosperity is ushered in. The faithful martyrs, constant even to death, who had never contaminated themselves by yielding to the demands of the beast, are now to be re-

stored to life, and advanced to an exalted state of reward in heaven. With Christ they there live, and with him they are there seated on thrones, having, by special divine favour, anticipated the final resurrection and exaltation. This is the *first* resurrection, and seems to comprehend only those who are entitled to peculiar rewards. The second resurrection differs from it, in the circumstance that it will be *general*, and will take place only after the world shall end. See on vs. 4—6 what is said in Exc. VI; where various questions are discussed respecting the Millennium.]

(4) And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them; and [I saw] the souls of those beheaded on account of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and who did not worship the beast, nor his image, and did not receive his mark upon the forehead and upon their hand; and they revived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Thrones are of course emblems of exalted station and dignity; for those who sit upon them must be kings, or like kings, i. e. they occupy an exalted rank or a high and dignified station.—*And they sat upon them;* Who? *Angels*, says Ewald, "for," adds he, "wrongly do some suppose that Christians sit upon them as judges." Yet if he means angels, we might well ask: In what part of the Scriptures are the *angels* in general represented as performing the office of *judging* in heaven? "Are they not all *ministering* spirits?" Besides, do we not know that Christians "shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. 6: 3. Is it not a plain and obvious truth, that "if we suffer with Christ, we shall also *reign* with him?" 2 Tim. 2: 12. Is it not promised to those *who overcome* in the Christian contest, that "they shall sit down with the Redeemer upon his throne?" Rev. 3: 21. Ewald assumes, that the office of *judging*, in its limited and special sense, is here described. But is this certain? In Hebrew, the book of *Judges* (שֹׁפְטִים) is a history of Jewish *rulers;* and nothing is more frequent than such a use of the words *to judge* and *a judge*, as designates the duty and office of superior or supreme ruler. Exactly in point seems to be Matt. 19: 28, where the Saviour tells the apostles, that "they shall sit on twelve *θρόνους, κρίνοντες* the twelve tribes of Israel," i. e. they shall be entitled to superiority over all their brethren of the Hebrew nation. And so in 1 Cor. 6: 3, *κρινοῦμεν* is employed. The word *κρίμα* in the clause before us, which in the N. Testament is often equivalent to the Hebrew מִשְׁפָּט, does not with certainty designate the appropriate office of *judging*, as we employ this word, but may be interpreted as applying to the supervision or making of statutes, ordinances, arrangements, etc., by those who are in a superior station. If it be so interpreted here, then *κρίμα ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς* will mean for substance the same thing as *ἐβασίλευσαν* in the latter part of the verse, the former being generic, while the latter takes a specific form of expression. This seems to many to be the most easy and natural construction of these parts of the verse.

But there is another construction which is possible, and perhaps even probable. Is not such a *judgment* here represented as being passed by others upon the martyrs, in connection with which they are raised from the dead and rewarded with the highest honours? In this case all is in good analogy with the last judgment. The *order* of the transactions in this case, we may suppose, is not absolutely determined by the words of the text, but only the *facts* of the case. Thus thrones, judges, sentence, are connected in the first clause; and martyrs, resurrection, and exaltation, in the last. The natural order of facts would be, the placing of the thrones, the seating of the judges, the resurrection, the sentence, the glorification. But we may say, that as the writer has combined all these in a single sentence, so he has grouped together things related, and not narrated events after the strict order of succession. The only difficulty that attends the mode of interpretation now proposed, is, that the third pers. plur. ἐκάθισαν is employed, as also κρίμα ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς. But this difficulty is not perhaps an insuperable one; for nothing scarcely is more common in the O. Testament and in the New, and above all in the Chaldee of the book of Daniel, than to employ the third pers. plur. for the *passive voice*, thus making a kind of impersonal verb of it; Gramm. § 174. Note 2. In such a case, whether the judge was *one* or *many*, it would make no difference with the form, i. e. the number, of the verb. The simple meaning of ἐκάθισαν ἐπ' αὐτούς, καὶ κρίμα ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς, would be: 'A tribunal was erected, and power of passing sentence was given.' Sentence on whom? Τὰς ψυχάς, etc., would be the answer, the Acc. being purposely employed to denote the object.

But there remains one difficulty after all. This is the κρίμα ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς. God and Christ must be included among the judges, or rather, must be regarded as the only supreme ones; and who could commit judgment to them? But as in Rev. 1: 4 the *seven spirits before the throne* are joined with the Father and Son (see Comm. in loc.), and as in 1 Tim. 5: 21 Paul unites God and Jesus Christ and the *elect angels*, may it not be that the writer here speaks in like manner of a heavenly *Consessus*, on this occasion, which, as it would include the *presence-angels*, might lead him to adopt the phraseology in question? An attentive comparison of Rev. 1: 4 and 1 Tim. 5: 21, would seem to render such a construction not improbable, at any rate not impossible. The *coöperation* of angels, in some important sense, on great occasions, is a doctrine not foreign to the Bible. We should compare not only Rev. 1: 4 and 1 Tim. 5: 21, as mentioned above, but also Acts 7: 53. Gal. 3: 19. Heb. 2: 2, where an important agency in giving the Law is expressly assigned to angels. If we admit the construction now before us, it frees us at least from one difficulty, viz., that which results

from the writer's telling us, that he saw thrones, and those who occupied them, *before* the restoration of the martyrs to life. If now it be the martyrs themselves who occupy the thrones from which κρίμα is dispensed, then it would seem natural that the verb ἔζησαν should *precede* the statement of this. But since the writer has not made it to precede, does he not mean, that *judgment* is dispensed by others, and not by the martyrs themselves, namely, that judgment which decrees to the martyrs resurrection and a thousand years' reign with Christ? Whether now this judgment actually is passed by God himself, by the Redeemer, or by either or both of these with the heavenly Consessus, the writer does not perhaps expressly say; yet the plural number of the verb, and specially the κρίμα ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς, looks rather as if the presence-angels, (for others cannot well be supposed), belonged to the implied Consessus. At least this must be admitted, in case we adopt the exegesis now in question.—Πεπελεκισμένων designates decapitation by means of the πέλεκυς, i. e. *axe*, because this was a common mode of ignominious execution among the Romans. But plainly it was not the writer's intention to confine the rewards of martyrs merely to those who suffered death in this particular way; for this specific and ignominious method of punishment is designated merely as the symbol of any and every kind of martyrdom.—*On account of the testimony of Jesus*, i. e. because of the testimony concerning Jesus. As the expression now is, it may include those who preached Christian doctrine, and also those who believed and obeyed it. The second phrase, *on account of the word of God*, is of somewhat wider extent than the preceding one. It embraces all the doctrines of true religion.—Καὶ οἵτινες, etc. Is this a mere relative pronoun, with reference to τὰς ψυχάς? Or does it designate an additional class of Christians, who had suffered in various ways on account of their fidelity, but had not been made actual martyrs? The latter exegesis is perhaps allowable; and since it is so, some deem it better to interpret the text in this way, because thus it would seem to comport more obviously with the nature of the case presented. In defence of this they allege, that surely it is not those only, who were actually *beheaded with the axe*, that were entitled to the rewards of martyrdom. The implication of the text is, in their view, that those who had refused all deference to the beast, must also, as well as martyrs, experience much annoyance in consequence of such refusal. The Nom. case here, οἵτινες, serves, as they interpret it, to distinguish this second class from the preceding; but comp. in Rev. 1: 5, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός. See more in Exc. VI.

Mark on the forehead and on the hand; see on Rev. 13: 16.—Καὶ ἔζησαν, *they revived, came to life*, i. e. returned to a life like the former one, viz. a union of soul and body. So does the word signify in Rev. 1: 8.

13: 14, and in many other passages cited in the remarks on Rev. 1: 8. Any other exegesis here would seem to be incongruous; for the writer does not mean to say that the *souls* of martyrs were dead before this period, and now would come to life, after he has, throughout the whole book, represented them as already being in heaven and praising God and the Redeemer there. Nor can he mean here, that now they *begin* to be *happy*, (which is a tropical sense of ζάω); for happy they had long been, because "the dead who die in the Lord are blessed ἄπαρτι." Still less can he mean that they become *immortal* now, or live forever; for they were immortal from the first moment of their existence. There would seem to remain, therefore, only one meaning which can be consistently given to ἔζησαν, viz. that they (the martyrs who renounced the beast) are now *restored to life*, viz. such life as implies the vivification of the body. Not to a union of the soul with a gross material body indeed, but with such an one as saints will in general have at the final resurrection—a spiritual body, 1 Cor. 15: 44. In no other way can this resurrection be ranked as *correlate* with the second resurrection named in the sequel; for in naming this the *first* resurrection (v. 5), John has developed such a correlation. How can the mere *bestowment of happiness* be all that the writer intends here by ἔζησαν, since all saints *live*, in this sense, from the moment when the body dies; yea, from the time when they are regenerated? If mere *advancement to a higher grade of happiness* be meant by ἔζησαν, then may we ask: Will not *all* saints be made happier by the augmented prosperity of the church on earth? What then is peculiar to martyrs? It is quite plain, indeed, that neither regeneration, nor happiness in heaven after the death of the body, can be placed by the side of the last resurrection as a *correlative* in the way of contrast. In the phrases *first* resurrection, and *second* or *last*, a discrepance in regard to *time* is implied, while in other respects the things compared appear to be essentially the same. Any great change from a degraded and wretched condition, temporal or spiritual, may indeed be figuratively called a *resurrection*, a *restoration to life*, i. e. to happiness; but it would be out of question to name it a *first* resurrection. This implies of necessity a comparison with a *second*, in which the first must be like the second in *kind*, but must precede it in *the order of time*. So in 1 Cor. 15: 23. 1 Thess. 4: 16, Paul in giving an account of the general resurrection, declares that "the dead in Christ shall rise *first*," i. e. before the wicked, who will also be raised. And thus it seems to be here, when John compares the two resurrections of saints; the words *first* and *second* mark the respective periods of time. For a further consideration of this exegesis, and also of objections and difficulties in respect to it, I must refer again to Exc. VI.

Until the thousand years shall have been completed. But what ensues,

after this? A dethronement, an essential change of state, rank, or condition? This is not of necessity implied. Should one say: 'God will reign as long as the world continues,' this would not imply of necessity that he will reign no longer. It merely affirms the certainty of his reign during all that period; which is the simple object of the speaker. Yet in most instances of such declarations, a *change* of some kind is indicated after the terminal period named. So here. After the thousand years, Satan will reappear, and Gog and Magog will come up and invade the territory of the saints. The undisturbed dominion and prosperity of the church, which the enthroned martyrs had seen and rejoiced in during the Millennium, is now once more interrupted. And so their *reign* becomes relatively changed. Their joy receives as it were a check. But to suppose an implication here that they are to be dethroned and reduced to their former state, is not necessary. No such implication is intended; at least, such a degradation seems incompatible with the views of the author. The description of their continued and uninterrupted reign, is one of the indications of the continued prosperity of the church during the long period mentioned. Viewed in this light, we can find no good reason to urge the meaning of the words employed, beyond the natural and easy sense which they afford.

As to the notion of a *descent to the earth* by Christ and the martyrs, and their *visible* reign here, there is not a word in the text, nor even an implication; at least I can find none. What a gross conception it would be, to mingle *celestial* and *terrestrial* beings in one common mass! The glorified Saviour, and the glorified martyrs, mingling with material and perishable beings, and becoming subject again to the laws of matter! If it be said, that the earth is itself to be changed entirely, at the beginning of the millennium, and to be fitted by this change for the abode of such glorious beings raised from the dead; where then, I ask, are Gog and Magog to live during this period, and nurture their hosts "like the sands of the sea for multitude?" And other men—are they still *mortal* beings, or not? If they are, then a *material* world, however Eden-like, is their place of residence; for flesh and blood can inhabit no world of a different character. How then are the glorious Saviour and the glorified martyrs literally to mingle and commune with material and fleshly and perishable beings? The thing is impossible, because it is against the fundamental law of our spiritual nature. If it were not impossible, moreover, still it is utterly improbable, on any ground, that the triumph and exaltation of the matyrs are to consist in their being sent back to the earth, in order to resume a terrestrial existence, surrounded with sufferings and sorrows. Besides all this, there is not a word from the Apocalyptist, as yet, respecting the so much talked of *renoration* of the earth. It is only at the period of the general judgment, that this reno-

vation takes place; Rev. 21: 1 seq. The *material* worlds pass away when this judgment comes; *but not before.* It follows then, that the idea of *spiritual* beings, as descending from the heavenly world to this, and spending a thousand years in a *material* world whose organization is not substantially changed, can have no foundation but in the phantasy of the brain. It is as incongruous as to say, that God has material eyes, hands, and other organs of sense. See further in Exc. VI.

(5) And the rest of dead revived not, until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.

Who are the *rest of the dead?* This question has been anticipated in the remarks made upon the preceding verse. The phrase seems naturally to include all who had not suffered martyrdom or persecution from the beast, i. e. had not suffered with patience and fortitude. Not that merely those who suffered by the *Romish* beast are included among the martyrs here; for, from the nature of the case, all who had been persecuted or slain on account of *true religion,* at any time or in any place, provided they had borne their trials and sorrows in a becoming manner, would seem to be included in the first resurrection.

Until the thousand years shall have been completed. Is the general resurrection to follow *immediately* upon the completion of this chiliad of years? This is not a necessary implication; see remarks on the same phrase above, under v. 3. Besides, from the writer's own showing, the end of the world is not contemporaneous with the end of the thousand years; for Gog and Magog invade the holy land *after* this, v. 7—8. All which the phrase above declares, is, that neither before, nor during any part of the thousand years, would the resurrection of *the rest of the dead* take place.

First resurrection, so called in distinction from the *second.* Of course it is one which precedes it in respect to *time;* it is not necessary that the two resurrections should differ in other respects. Indeed, the obvious implication here is, that they do not substantially differ; for what else can the οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ τῶν νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔζησαν mean, except that the rest of men must wait until the second resurrection, before they would be raised up in like manner as those had been who were partakers of the first resurrection? But the subject has been already discussed, in the remarks on v. 4.

(6) Blessed and holy is he who hath a part in the first resurrection! Over such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Blessed and holy must be emphatic here, for they can hardly bear the simple and ordinary meaning. All saints of every age are blessed and

holy in reality and to a certain extent, let them live or die where or when they may. The phrase in our text, therefore, must be employed in an *emphatic* sense, in a sense which drew the writer's special attention, and which he intended should also be specially noted by the reader. Moreover, all this is not only compatible with the interpretation of the preceding verses, but helps to confirm it. The resurrection of the body is everywhere held out, in the N. Testament, as the condition and precursor of a higher degree of perfection and happiness to the saints. So here; the first resurrection brings those who are partakers of it, sooner than others, to the perfection of their nature. Ewald explains ἅγιος here, by ἱερεῖς in the sequel, i. e. these, like priests, shall be henceforth consecrated to the service of God. But why should we thus separate ἅγιος from μακάριος? The interpretation given above seems more probable.

Over such, or *these, the second death hath no power;* i. e. they are secure against all possible future evil. The preceding clause exhibits their actual condition or positive state of happiness; the present clause, their freedom from all danger that their condition will be changed. *The second death*, according to v. 14, is *the being cast into the lake of fire.* —*Priests of God and Christ*, see on Rev. 1: 6. Here it means: They shall be near to Christ, and most honorably employed in his service; the sequel shows, that they shall be advanced to the highest honours, i. e. shall, like kings, be enthroned; comp. Rev. 3: 21.

(7, 8) And when the thousand years shall have expired, Satan shall be loosed from his prison, and he shall go forth to lead astray the nations who are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for war, whose number is as the sand of the sea.

Here then are nations accessible to the wiles of Satan, nations who live beyond the boundaries of the great empire which has so long been under the peaceful reign of the Messiah. They live, as we express it in common parlance, *out of the world*, i. e. out of the great civilized and christianized world, or in *the four corners of the earth.* Of course the earth is here, as throughout the Scriptures, conceived of as an extended plain, the four corners of which are the most remote from the centre; and the centre, moreover, is regarded as the *holy city.* Their number too is great, *like the sand of the sea.* Not an intimation is given that they become *apostates* from a former profession of Christianity, or that Christianity had ever spread among them. Every thing in the description wears the appearance of a meaning the reverse of this. Satan does not *deceive the elect*, in this case, but leads astray those who had never been converted to the Christian faith. That this is so, appears from the face of the narrative; for how comes it that Satan finds no

access to men any-where, except *in the four corners of the earth?* Had those living there been Christians, like the rest of men, what reason can be given why they should, all at once and in such immense numbers, be seduced from their Christian allegiance, while no inroads are any-where else made upon the domains of Christianity? I see no way in which this question can be satisfactorily answered.

Inquiry respecting Gog and Magog.

Why does John name this third and last formidable and persecuting power, GOG *and* MAGOG? To answer this question we must go back to the prophecy of Ezekiel, which is the prototype of the author in the present case. In Ezekiel 37: 1—14, the prophet gives us a most graphic description of the apparently desperate state of the Jewish nation in their exile, under the image of an immense valley full of dry bones. These he sees in a vision to become reanimated, and learns from this, that Israel will again be restored, and will live and flourish, vs. 11—14. He then predicts a union of the ten and of the two tribes in one nation; and, finally, the coming of the Messiah and his reign over them; vs 15—28. At some future period, for so the vision represents it, Gog of the land of Magog and his confederates come up against the holy land and people; but they are slaughtered with immense destruction, and Israel is troubled no more; chap. xxxviii. xxxix. Then follows the flourishing state of the land, the rebuilding of a magnificent temple and city, and a new and perpetual apportionment of the holy land; chap. xl—xlviii. Nothing can be plainer, than that the Apocalyptist had all this picture in his eye, when he wrote the verses before us; and, in my apprehension, he has rightly understood and explained the main purport of Ezek. xxxvii—xlviii, which certainly tallies, in all its leading features, with the description now under examination.

With these views respecting the ultimate period of the world agree the representations in Zech. xiv; also Joel 3: 9—21; and perhaps Dan. 12: 1—3. At all events, no satisfactory account of the real meaning of these passages of Scripture, which has its basis on other ground, has yet been given.

Thus John, under imagery borrowed from Ezekiel, describes the third and last great effort of the enemies of the church to destroy her. That the names of these enemies will literally be *Gog* and *Magog*, and that they are literally to come from the four corners of the earth, and besiege the literal Jerusalem, no one versed in the language of the prophecy will attempt to contend. Enough that the names of old enemies are employed to designate new ones, as yet without a name. Enough that they come from the bosom of the unconverted heathen, and that they oppose and persecute Christians wherever they meet them. These are the *things* signified; all the rest is costume.

Something more needs to be said, however, in order to give the reader a fuller view of Gog and Magog, so that he may know what impression the mention of these names by John would naturally make upon his readers. In Gen. 10: 2, *Magog* is mentioned as a son of Japhet. Elsewhere the word is found only in Ezekiel, xxxviii. xxxix.; in which passage it means a *land*

or *country*, (38: 2), of which Gog is the prince. With it are associated Meshach and Tubal; which gives us a clue to the locality of Magog; for those two countries lie between the Euxine and Caspian Seas, or at the southeast extremity of the Euxine Sea; Rosenm. Bib. Geog. I. p. 240. Ges. Lex. Magog was doubtless in the neighborhood of these countries, yet, still further north, and probably among the Caucasian mountains. The people of that region, it seems, were a terror to middle Asia, in the same manner as the Scythians were to the Greeks and Romans. Hence they have often been named the *Scythians of the East*. They have preserved their original character down to the present hour; as is evident from their recent long continued contests with the Russians.

Intercourse with such distant and savage nations was scarcely possible in ancient times; and hence, from their numbers and strength, they were regarded with great fear and horror; just as the Scythians were looked upon by the Greeks and Romans, and as the Tartars are regarded by the oriental nations. Of this there is most abundant evidence. The Arabian writers are full of the mention of *Yajouj* and *Majouj* (as they pronounce the names, making *g* soft); see Asiatisches Magazin by Klaproth, 1802, Vol. I. p. 138 seq., who has made a large collection of passages where Gog and Magog are named. We can trace this opinion, viz., that Gog and Magog were the *eastern Scythians*, and lived in the regions of the Caucasus and around the Caspian Sea, to a remote period among both Christians and Arabians. Jerome (in loc. in Ezech.) says of Magog, that it means "Scythian nations, fierce and innumerable, who live beyond the Caucasus and the Lake Maeotis, and near the Caspian Sea, and spread out even onward to India." Theodoret also says of Gog and Magog, that "they are Scythian nations." Asseman, in his Biblioth. Orientalis, Tom. III. P. II. 16, 17, 20, has given excerpts from old Syriac authors, which appeal to Gog and Magog as inhabiting the same region that Jerome mentions. This is still further confirmed by a Syriac poem on Alexander the Great, written by a Jacobite Christian, in the measure common to that sect, and published from a Codex at Paris, by G. Knös in his Syriac Chrestomathy, 1807. Jacob Bardai, the father and leader of the Jacobites, flourished in the latter half of the sixth century, so that the poem in question cannot be earlier than this period. But it seems to have been written either at this period or near it, for the Syriac is altogether of the antique cast. Mar Yohannan, the Nestorian bishop, lately in this country, to whom I showed this production, avers that there can be no question of the antiquity of the piece, if we may judge from the dialect which it exhibits. In this remarkable production—remarkable for its curious matter—the writer assumes the position, that Alexander the Great built a *wall*, or rather extended a *gate*, between a pass in the northern (Caucasus) ridge of mountains, so as to prevent an irruption of Gog and Magog from that quarter. He gives a circumstantial description of the process of constructing this huge gate or wall, which was covered with iron and copper, so that it could not be cut through, pp. 86—89. An angel is next represented as commissioning Alexander to carry on his conquests over all Egypt and Asia, until he should come to the river Kalat [Indus?] where he should stop, p. 91. In pp. 94—105, the author represents Gog and Magog, who had been hitherto barred out by the great iron gate, as assembling in such multitudes as to cover the earth with their forces. God himself now interposes, opens the gate, and lets in upon the countries of the

southern region the countless hosts of Gog. "In the seven thousandth" [year] "says the author," in which the heavens and the earth shall be destroyed, [i. e. near the end of the world], there shall come forth armies and hosts from their countries, [viz. the countries of Gog and Magog], they shall come, armies and hosts from their countries; they shall come, thousands and marshalled ranks and assemblages without number; they shall rise up behind the gate and shout; their cry shall be louder than the wind or the crashing thunder, that the Lord, our Lord, may open to us the gate, that we may go forth over the earth. At that time, the mountains and earth and men therein shall tremble, because of that voice [uttered] in anger and indignation and impetuosity. Among the marshalled ranks shall go forth a cry at that time; and the voice of the Lord shall cast down the lofty gate," p. 94 seq. After this, the poet describes them as marching over the earth, and making it desolate in all quarters: "They will come forth, filling the earth with their concourses, with sword, and exile, and battles, and blood, and many murders; when the anger of the Lord shall wax hot against the wicked, he will send upon the earth those of Gog and the house of Magog," p. 97. In subsequent pages, (103, 104, 105), the author again brings to view the horrible slaughter which will be made by them, until the earth becomes entirely desolate.

Such is the curious *μῦθος* of the Syriac poet; and almost in exact accordance with this account, is that which Mohammed has given in the Coran. It is hardly probable that he had seen the Jacobite poem, or that the author of that poem had seen the Coran; both, therefore, must have drawn from one common source, viz. *tradition*. In Sura xviii. 94, Mohammed represents a northern barbarous people as addressing Alexander the Great, (whom he calls *Two-horned*), and complaining that Gog and Magog lay waste their country. The king then aids them in building up a high and strong wall, which he makes solid with melted iron and brass. By this Gog and Magog are excluded from their predatory excursion toward the South, until the last period of the world. Then the Lord will throw down the wall, and give free access to the barbarian hordes. When they have done their work of destruction, they, with all other infidels, shall be turned into Gehenna; see Koran, ed. Marac. II. p. 424 seq. In Sura XXI. 95 seq. Mohammed again speaks of the cities which he and his followers had destroyed, and says of them, that they shall not be renewed, "until an opening is made for Gog and Magog, who shall come with haste from all the lofty mountains," i. e. the Caucasian ridge. In other words, the cities shall *never* be rebuilt; for Gog and Magog are, according to the Coran, to come only at the end of time.

The striking agreement of these passages from Mohammed with the Jacobitic poem, in all the important features, is apparent at first view; and it betrays, beyond all doubt, a common source whence both writers drew. The story must therefore have been an *ancient* one, which had obtained so wide a currency. The building by Alexander of such a wall, or any wall, between the Caspian and Euxine seas, to fence out the Caucasian hordes, is a matter of which history knows, or at any rate says, nothing. But that his successors, in the monarchy of the East, erected a structure there for defence against the northern hosts, seems to be altogether probable. That some early king in this region did so, is quite certain; for the wall is now standing, for the most part, and is still called *the wall of Gog and Magog*.

Peter the Great, of Russia, took possession of the region between the Euxine and Caspian Seas about 1772; and at that period, S. G. Emelin was sent out thither, on a tour of examination, by the Russian government. In his *Travels*, published at Petersburg in 1774, he has given an account of the wall in question which leaves no room to doubt in regard to it. From Derbend on the Caspian Sea, the head-quarters of the Russian military guard in that country, Emelin directed his course westward, toward the Euxine, and he soon met with some ruins of the wall above-mentioned, and afterwards with the wall itself for large distances completely in a state of preservation, then a wall half ruined, etc.; while square and pyramidal towers along the wall were found, at hailing and signal distances. Two of these he mounted upon; and from their tops he could descry the snowy ridges of the Caucasus. The whole were so constructed, that intelligence could be conveyed from any distance, in a few minutes, to the citadel at Derbend, whence troops could be immediatley sent out. According to the universal tradition of the inhabitants, this *wall of Gog and Magog* extends from the Caspian to the Euxine or Black Sea. All credible traces of the builder are lost, so that no doubt can remain that it must be very ancient, and not improbably it was built by some of Alexander's successors in the East; whence it was easy for tradition to make out the story which the Jacobite poet and Mohammed have told. The passage from Emelin (Vol. III. p. 12) is cited at length in Rosenmueller's Bib. Geog. I. p. 244.

Ker Porter, the celebrated English traveller, visited Derbend in 1819, where the story was told him respecting the wall in question; but accident prevented his going to see it; Travels, II. p. 520.

The reader, who wishes for more in respect to this subject, may consult Reinegg's Beschreibung des Caucasus, I. p. 120. Ritter's Erdkunde. Th. II. p. 834 seq. Bayers de Muro Caucaseo, in the Petersburg Comm. Acad. Scient. Vol. I. and in his Opuscula, p. 94. See also Hartmann's Aufklärungen über Asien, I. p. 160 seq., Herbelot, Orient. Biblioth., article *Yagiouge et Magiouge* (Gog and Magog). Hase's Entdeckungen, etc. I. p. 13 seq. See in particular, Rosenm. Bib. Geog. I. p. 240 seq. and Comm. in Ezech. 38: 2.

It should be noted, before we dismiss this topic, that the use made of Gog and Magog, in the Apocalypse, is somewhat different from that in Ezekiel xxxviii. xxxix. In the prophet, Gog is considered as the prince of the land of Magog, who also holds in subjection Meshech and Tubal; but in the Apocalypse, Gog and Magog both are *nations*, or at least countries which are the representatives of nations. In the same light as John, the Arabians, Syrians, and other nations have regarded them. At any rate, the departure from Ezekiel in this respect, while it is quite unimportant as to the principal meaning of the passage, is yet of such a character as to show that John thought and acted for himself.

The passages both in Ezekiel and John, which have respect to Gog and Magog, are not, it would seem, to be considered merely as *mythic*. We have abundant and undoubted evidence, that in ancient times there were actual Caucasian hordes distinguished by the names in question, and that they were a formidable reality. But that Ezekiel, in his prophecy, meant to be understood as predicting the invasion of Palestine by Gog and Magog in the *literal* sense, is hardly credible. He uses these names to designate

distant and savage nations; and in the same way John employs them. Just in the same manner we now employ the word *barbarians*.

I cannot doubt, after long and often repeated investigation, that Ezekiel has the same general aim in view as John, and designs briefly to disclose the *distant future* of the church, in the latter part of her Messianic days. Considered in this way, the two writers cast great light upon each other. That both should employ these names in a *tropical* way, is no more strange than that we should employ the words *Scythian*, *Tartar*, *Indian*, etc., in the same manner. Understood in this way, there is no special difficulty attending the exegesis of either author; while the literal sense involves us in meshes from which our feet cannot be extricated. Nothing could be more natural than for Ezekiel, who lived in Mesopotamia, to speak of Gog and Magog, since they were the formidable enemies of all that region; and that John, writing on the same subject should retain the same names, was equally natural.

(9) And they went up over the breadth of the land, and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

The basis of this representation, considered in a literal respect, is the land of Palestine and the holy city. Approaching the latter from any quarter of the earth, is, in the idiom of the Scriptures, called *going up*, עָלָה, *ἀναβαίνω*.—*Breadth of the land* appears to mean the *whole extent* of it; see the same expression in Hab. 1: 6.—*Encircling* or *surrounding the camp of the saints and the beloved city* implies that the number of the hostile forces is exceedingly great, *ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης*. Whether the camp is here supposed to be within or without the walls of the city, is not said; but probably it is without. In either case, the great number of the enemy and their hostile intentions are clearly indicated. *Literally* we cannot well suppose the passage was designed to be taken, any more than that *mount Zion* is to be literally understood in Heb. 12: 22, and the like in other passages. Sentiment: The last mighty struggle against Christianity will be made by many barbarous nations, who will put forth most strenuous efforts to destroy it, and will actually bring it into great danger.

Fire came down out of heaven, etc. In this third catastrophe there is no express mention of two opposing armies, but *παρεμβολὴν τῶν ἁγίων* naturally implies this. The issue of a formal contest, however, is not waited for. Divine interposition performs the work. As the enemies of Elijah, in ancient times, were devoured by fire from heaven, so the congregated hosts of Gog and Magog are to be destroyed. The war, which had been fierce and seemingly successful on the side of the enemy, (inasmuch as they have come to the investiture of the capital city), is brought to a speedy and final termination.—*Ἐκ* denotes the source or place from which; *ἀπό* stands before the moving cause or agent.—

Κατέφαγεν, intensive, *to eat up, devour*, so that it denotes utter excision. This Aor. II. has no forms correspondent. The Pres. is *ἐσθίω*, the real root is *φαγ* or *φεγ*. See a similar destruction of the wicked and of enemies, in Gen. xix. Ps. 11: 6. Is. 29: 6. Ezek. 39: 6. 38: 22, and comp. in Apoc. 8: 7. 11: 5. 13: 13.

The use of the Praeter tense in this verse, while the Fut. is employed in v. 8, has nothing peculiar in it, when the *prophetic* style is taken into consideration. The use of the Praeter increases the assertion of certainty.

(10) And the devil, who led them astray, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night, forever and ever.

The Part. *πλανῶν* has here the sense of the Imperf.; see Gramm. § 173. 2. In 19: 20 it is related of the beast and false prophet, that they were *cast into the lake of fire;* but Satan, who had coöperated with them, was confined in the great abyss, 20: 1—3. Here, as the *final* catastrophe is completed, Satan is disposed of in the same way, and thus he is united again with his former associates. The imagery is the most terrific which the whole compass of nature can afford—a lake of fire burning with brimstone. The intensity of the flame, the suffocating nature of the fumes, and also the revolting odour which issues from the sulphur, all conspire to render this an image of unparalleled horror.—*Day and night*, i. e. without cessation or unintermittingly; *forever and ever*, i. e. without end.

Such is the awful doom of all who oppose the gospel. The writer does not say here, what becomes of Gog and Magog; but the implication of course is, that, like Judas, *they go to their own place.* This is not at present the *lake of fire;* for we see in v. 15 below, that the wicked in general are not cast into that lake, until *after* the resurrection and the judgment-day. They go into an apartment of Hades, if I may so speak, i. e. a portion of the under-world or world of the dead, which is reserved for the wicked. This is the place of "*outer darkness*, where is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." Hades and its king, *θάνατος*, as appears by v. 14 below, are to be cast into the lake of fire, after the judgment-day, i. e. they are to be utterly destroyed. The place for *disembodied* spirits will be of no further use, after the resurrection of the body and its re-union with the soul. *Death* will then have completed his work, and will therefore be no more. But inasmuch as such a condition of the wicked, after death, was viewed and believed by his readers to be a matter of course, John deemed it unnecessary here particularly to describe it. But the special and final punishment of Satan he has made prominent to our view.

If any reader is disposed to raise difficulties here, on the ground that the beast and false prophet are sentenced to the final hell, or lake of fire, *before* the judgment-day, he should call to mind, that he is reading *poetry*. The characters are symbolic, generic, not specific individualities. To represent them as cast into the lake of fire, is to show that a fearful and most aggravated doom awaits all who are symbolized by them. As to the machinery of poetry, it would plainly be unjust to exact the precision of prose, in the modes of representation and expression. So with the rich man, in the parable of Lazarus; the *fire* in which he is tortured figuratively expresses the severity of his punishment.

GENERAL JUDGMENT: CHAP. XX. 11—15.

[The opposition of all enemies being thus effectually put down, it follows of course that the church will afterwards enjoy undisturbed tranquillity and prosperity. But on this the writer does not dwell. Still, the fact that he does not, makes nothing against the supposition of a long intervening period between the destruction of Gog and Magog and the general judgment. This subject has been already discussed in the remarks which precede chap. xx.; to which I must refer the reader. It should be remembered, that one leading topic of the book is *the subjugation of the enemies of the church;* and that topic is now completed. The writer passes on immediately, therefore, to the final and glorious reward of the righteous, when the probation of all the redeemed is to be completed, and the august drama is brought to its final close.

But before the final rewards can be distributed, a general judgment is to be instituted, at which all that have been concerned with the Redeemer's kingdom, either as friends or enemies, are to be present, and to receive their final sentence. The remainder of the chapter is occupied with describing this scene.]

(11) And I saw a great white throne, and him who sat upon it, from whose face the heaven and the earth fled away, and no place was found for them.

The *καί* with which this transition begins, is usual throughout the Apocalypse, whatever may be the distance of time which intervenes between the things related, or the dissimilarity of the things themselves. Nothing can be deduced from the use of it, to prove an immediate consecution in point of time. See on *καί*, in Comm. on 5: 1.—*Λευκόν, splendid,* as usual elsewhere in this book. The original source of the image seems to be the *white heat* of metallic substances melted in an intense fire. —*Τὸν καθήμενον* designates the *Redeemer* here; as the analogy of Christian doctrine and Rev. 21: 5—8 clearly shows. So Ewald.—*The fleeing away of heaven and earth* is a poetic portraiture of the effects of the divine presence. Even the natural creation shrinks back with awe and seeks to hide itself; comp. Ps. 18: 7, 15. 77: 16—19. 114: 3—5. See the like in Enoch 50: 3, 4. 51: 10. There too the Messiah is repre-

sented as the Judge; 60: 8—11. 61: 1—9. To seek for a *literal* sense in such a passage, would be quite a superfluous undertaking.

(12) And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before the throne; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged by the things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Small and great, i. e. all of every class and station. The expression refers to *rank*, not to age.—*Standing before the throne*, i. e. gathered around it as the tribunal from which their doom is to be received.—*And the books were opened*, i. e. the books in which were recorded all the actions (external and internal) of men. The imagery is drawn from the records of accusations made against such as are impeached before human courts of justice. The *plural* is employed very naturally, considering how voluminous such records must be.—*And another book was opened*, viz. the Lamb's book of life, in which the names of all his followers are recorded; see on 3: 5, also Rev. 21: 27. Col. 4: 3.—*And the dead were judged by the things written in the books;* what portion of the dead? Or are *all* included? Naturally the latter must be the meaning here, in connection with μικρούς καὶ μεγάλους above, i. e. men of all ranks. All, therefore, must be condemned by these books, i. e. so far as the books are concerned; for in them the *sins* of all are recorded. But, on the other hand, some *good* deeds of the righteous are also recorded in the "other book;" and for these there is a sure promise of reward. Still, some other title than even a balance of good works, (if that indeed should be in their favour), must they have. They must, through grace and the atoning blood of the Lamb, be forgiven; and if they have been forgiven, and their names are recorded in the Lamb's book of life, then they will not only be acquitted as it respects the charges recorded against them, but rewarded for their good works, imperfect as they are.

Moreover there is an implication here, that *different degrees* of punishment and of reward will be the consequence of final judgment. The sentence will be κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν, which necessarily implies this.

That *all* of the human race will make their appearance before the tribunal of the judgment-day, if not taught here, seems to be taught in the next verse.

(13) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and Death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one, according to their works.

In other words: Not only those who have been buried beneath the earth, in the proper domains of Death and Hades, but all who have perished and are buried in the *ocean*, will be raised to life. Here Death and Hades are plainly personified, and represented as governing the

under-world. Accordingly it is *they*, who give up the dead under their domain. See on Rev. 6: 8, where the same personification is palpable. Death is king, and Hades (so to speak) his prime minister, or at least his agents or ministers, the word being used as a noun of multitude.—*And they were judged, every one, according to their works;* ἕκαστος individualizes, and is emphatic here, i. e. the writer means to say emphatically, that no one will escape the final trial. Ἕκαστος, as a *nomen multitudinis*, often takes a plural verb, as here.

(14) And Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death, the lake of fire.

If Death and Hades as personified are here meant, (which seems plainly to be the case), then, considered as *persons*, they may consistently be represented as being cast into the lake of fire. *Personification* being admitted, there is no violation of propriety in such a representation. But from the very fact that Death and Hades are mere symbolic and not real personages, it follows, that a *literal* punishment of them is out of question. Of course, therefore, the only intelligible meaning must be, that Death and Hades are now destroyed, i. e. they are to be no more. None ever come from or out of the lake of fire, for this is the *second* death. That such a view of the subject is altogether appropriate to the context, is quite clear. The new world or creation (21: 1 seq.) is to be immutable and eternal. There will be no more pain, nor any death. Of course, therefore, after the creation of the new world, the power of Death and Hades is to cease, and their influence will be forever abolished. Their work is then done or completed, when the general judgment comes. *Mortality* is at an end; *immortality* follows. To inflict the second death, does not fall or come within the province or commission of θάνατος and ᾅδης; consequently these tyrants must now become extinct, or die so as to live and act no more.

By repeating the sentiment, *this is the second death, the lake of fire*, the writer means to say, that the death to which θάνατος and ᾅδης are now brought, is one from which there is no resurrection. It is final.

If any one should say, that *being cast into the lake of fire* necessarily denotes *continued torment*, and therefore it must have such a meaning here, the answer is easy, and has already for substance been given. Death and Hades are merely *symbolical* personifications, and such are of course incapable of actual torment. Destruction of their power, then, is the necessary meaning here. But if any one chooses rather to understand Hades of *place*, viz., the grave or under-world,—then the meaning would be, that this place, with its king or ruler ὁ θάνατος, now becomes incorporated with the great lake of fire, and so will henceforth be a part of the place of endless torment. But the former meaning is more facile, and therefore preferable.

A *second* death differs from the first in the fact, that it is not a separation of soul and body, but a state of *continued agony* like to that which the first death inflicts, like it in *intensity*, but not in kind.

Thus, it will be seen, effectual provision is made for the *eternal* blessedness of the righteous. "Death is swallowed up in victory." "The last enemy, i. e. death, is now destroyed;" 1 Cor. 15: 23, 54. In this respect John and Paul completely harmonize.

(15) And if any one was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

The writer speaks here in the *past* tense, the scene having already passed in vision before him. The declaration reminds us strongly of our Saviour's words: "All those whom thou hast given me have I kept." The names enrolled in the book of grace are not to be blotted out. Others have sinned, and have not repented, and therefore are not forgiven. Their names do not appear on the records of pardon. The law must therefore take its course. *They are cast into the lake of fire.* This, being the *second* death, is followed by no resurrection. Inasmuch as death, in its first meaning and with its original power, is now no more, there is no way of relief after a death entirely different in its nature. The sufferings of those who undergo the second death, cannot be alleviated by expiring; for there is no expiring. Pardon, moreover, is now too late. Besides, inasmuch as their names are *not* written in the Lamb's book of life, how shall they become the subjects of pardon? And what is more than all, the great work of atonement and reconciliation is now at an end; Christ gives up his mediatorial kingdom, having no more *official* duties (if we may so speak) to perform; and how are they to be ransomed without an acting Mediator? See 1 Cor. 15: 24—28.

Thus is sealed the eternal doom of the dragon, beast, false prophet, and all their followers; yea, and of all who resemble them in the temper of their hearts or the action of their lives. Nothing now remains but to exhibit the glorious reward of the righteous, in the eternal world, as contrasted with the awful punishment of the wicked.

THE NEW JERUSALEM: CHAP. XXI. 1.

(1) And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there is no more sea.

Such is the picture, which Peter also draws, of the events that follow the dissolution of the present material worlds, 2 Pet. 3: 7—13. The original of both is in Is. 65: 17. 66: 22. This *new heaven* and *new earth* are not, as it appears, to be constructed by fitting up and vamping

ing anew the old and worn out systems. The first heavens and earth *pass away*; "They pass away with a great noise, and the elements are melted with fervent heat;" 2 Pet. 3: 10. Accordingly, the *new Jerusalem*, the future abode of the blessed, is represented in the sequel as *coming down from God*, and of course as not being of this material creation. This is sufficient to show what estimate is to be put upon the dreams of men, who urge us to believe that the present material earth is itself to be renovated, and become the personal abode of Christ and the martyrs, during the millennial period. Not a word is said of such a renovation, until *after* the general judgment.

(2) And the holy city, the new Jerusalem, I saw descending out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

This is "the Jerusalem which is above," spoken of by Paul, Gal. 4: 26; this, "the mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," Heb. 12: 22. Comp. Rev. 3: 12. All glorious is the city, too, for such must be whatever comes from God out of heaven. Splendid is its attire, i. e. its construction and materials, for it is like the splendid dress of a bride adorned for her husband. The author alludes here to the comparison of the church to a *wife*, Rev. 19: 7, 8. Nor is the congruity of the representation more striking in a rhetorical, than in a *physiological* respect. When the resurrection of the body takes place, there will be a new state of being. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15: 50); therefore, when the body is raised and united once more to the soul, it will be "a spiritual body," 1 Cor. 15: 44. The natural consequence is, that a *new world* is necessary for its abode. The *Paradise* in which pious souls had hitherto been, was a place of happiness fitted for them when separated from their respective bodies. But now a new state of being commences. It is not altogether and merely *spiritual*, for the body is again united with the soul; it is not a *material* state, for the body by its resurrection has become a *spiritual* body. This new state of being demands of course a new world for its appropriate development. In conformity with this plain principle of physiology, (if I may so speak), a new world is provided; not (as before said) from the ruins of the old material heavens and earth vamped up anew, not of this visible creation, but a *new* Jerusalem from God and out of heaven. The nature of the case fully justifies the representations of the writer. It is not the mere fiction of a poetic imagination, but there is a corresponding reality.

(3) And I heard a loud voice from heaven, saying: Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them—their God.

The voice from heaven gives definite information to the seer respect-

ing the vision before him.—*The tabernacle of God* refers to the place in which (if the expression may be allowed) God personally dwells; e. g. as in the temple and tabernacle of old. This tent or tabernacle is in the midst of the dwellings of the saints, i. e. he dwells *with them*. The idea is, that they pitch their tents around his. He is of course, as of old, their King and Lord, and consequently they are *his people*. He will continue to remain with them, i. e. he will never withdraw himself, as he had done more than once from the Jewish Sanctuary.—THEIR GOD comprehends all that he can be to them, and do for them, as God.

For illustration of *tabernacling among them*, comp. Ex. 40: 38. Ezek. 37: 28. 43: 7—9. How frequent the promise is of *being their God*, and of *making them his people*, and how pregnant with meaning, may be seen by comparing Lev. 26: 11, 12. Jer. 24: 7, 31. Zech. 8: 8. Ezech. 37: 27, 28. 11: 20, etc.

(4) And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither mourning, nor outcry, nor grievance, shall be any more; for former things are passed away.

The idea is not, that God will so compassionate sufferers in the new and heavenly city, as to *wipe away their tears*, but that he will constitute such a state of things, that no more tears shall be shed; as the sequel plainly shows. Comp. Is. 25: 8.—*There shall be no more death;* comp. 20: 6, 14, 15. Death himself perishes at the general judgment; of course his sway can no more be exercised.—*Πένθος, mourning*, because of death.—*Κραυγή, outcry*, viz. because of violence and oppression; comp. צְעָקָה in Ex. 3: 7, 9. Is. 5: 6. 19: 20. Ps. 9: 13.—*Πόνος* means every and any kind of *grievance*, or source of misery. Into the new world these things can never enter. They clave to the old world, as long as it lasted; but the new one demands a state of things correspondent to its own nature.—*Former things are passed away*, i. e. not only these and all such evils themselves, but everything which could occasion them.

(5) And he who was sitting upon the throne said: Behold, I make all things new! And he said to me: Write; for these words are faithful and true.

He who sits upon the throne here, I take to be the *Messiah*, beyond all reasonable doubt. So Ewald. The sequel will disclose this.—*Words faithful and true;* comp. 19: 9, and what is there said.—The command to *write*, shows that at any rate a part of the Apocalypse was written, while the visions were passing. At all events such is the natural construction of the words employed.

He who sitteth enthroned as the Judge of all, now solemnly declares,

that all his promises to the saints, as to their future reward, may be relied upon with entire confidence. *The making of all things new*, means entirely changing the old state of things, in which death, mourning, sin, and sorrow, so much prevailed. Comp. Is. 43: 19. Jer. 31: 22.

(6, 7) And he said to me: It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to him who thirsteth of the water of life freely; he who overcometh, shall possess these things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Γέγονε, it is done, i. e. all which has been decreed respecting the punishment of the impious and the glorious reward of the righteous, is carried into execution. An enduring heaven and hell are now constituted. The great plan of redeeming grace is accomplished. Comp. 16: 17, where the destruction of spiritual Babylon is decreed by a *γέγονε*.—That he *who sits on the throne* here names himself *Alpha and Omega*, necessarily reminds us of Rev. 1: 8, where the same appellations are applied to God; and also of Rev. 2: 8, where *πρῶτος* and *ἔσχατος* (of the same import) are beyond all doubt applied to Christ. It is no proof, then, that it is not *Christ* who is here represented as sitting upon the throne, because such appellations are here given. Besides, the promises are such here as Christ was wont to make; comp. John 4: 14. 6: 35, comp. vs. 58. See also Is. 55: 1. John 7: 37. Rev. 22: 17. He who sits enthroned, is the First and the Last, i. e. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;" consequently his promises may be relied on, for they will be fully carried into execution.—For the further development of the idea conveyed by the phrase *the water of life*, see 22: 1 seq. Like the oriental thrones, which have a fountain of cool water springing up near by, so the throne on which the Redeemer sits, is regarded as furnished with a like fountain of water; and from this his friends and followers, who are admitted to his presence, drink.—*Δωρεάν, gratuitously.* They have not won this privilege by merit; it is bestowed by grace.—*Κληρονομήσει*, lit. *inherit*, but secondarily (as often in Hebrew) *possess.*—*I will be his God*, etc., the repetition (see v. 3) denotes intensity of expression. It should be noted also, that *Christ* here says, that he will be the *God* of the blessed in heaven.

(8) But to the fearful and unbelieving, to those who have made themselves abominable, even murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars—their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

Oratio variata, i. e. the structure of the sentence is not completed according to the tenor of its commencement. All that is necessary, however, in order to make it plain, is to insert mentally [*οὐκ ἔσομαι θεός, ἀλλὰ*] *τὸ μέρος, κ. τ. λ.*

First of all the speaker excludes from the abode of the blessed such as apostatize from the Christian faith. *The fearful* means timid Christians, who, moved by persecution, leave the ranks of believers and go over to those of the ἄπιστοι, i. e. to such as place no confidence in the promises or the threatenings of the gospel.—Ἐβδελυγμένοις I have rendered as a Part. Mid. voice, having an intransitive reflexive sense, but still as an *active* and not a passive word. It seems to be the *genus*, of which all the classes that follow are the *species*. So Ewald.—Φαρμακοῖς has an intensity of meaning, which we of the present day can scarcely realize. The Mosaic law denounces its severest penalties against those engaged in the arts of sorcerers, for the reason that these arts were connected with the rites of idolaters. So here, φαρμακοῖς includes all those who took any part in the magic rites of the heathen. Accordingly, in its train we find εἰδωλολάτραις, i. e. the worshippers of idols. Ψευδέσι, from ψευδής, refers to the *false doctrines* of idolaters. All this classification is appropriate to the times and circumstances of the writer. The first two classes named are those which point out *apostates;* the rest designate the leading vices of those who persecute the church. They were *murderers*, i. e. they destroyed Christians; they were *whoremongers*, i. e. the worship of their gods demanded or permitted pollution. They were given to magic rites, in order to carry on their impostures and to control the belief of the common people. They *served idols*, instead of the Maker of heaven and earth. So the *liars* are those who invented and propagated false doctrines among the heathen.—If any one should imagine, that these are the only classes of sinners, who will, at the day of judgment, be sentenced to the lake of fire, he would commit a great and fatal mistake. Here only such offenders are named, as the author and the church of his time were specially concerned with.

(9) And there came one of the seven angels, who had the seven vials filled with the seven last plagues, and he spake with me, saying: Come, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

In v. 1, John is represented as seeing the new Jerusalem in its descent from heaven. Here he is led by the angel-interpreter to contemplate the glories of it, after it has obtained a fixed position. That one of the seven angels charged with overthrowing great Babylon, is here commissioned to disclose the new and splendid city built for the persecuted church, is quite appropriate.—*The bride, the Lamb's wife*, is here evidently applied to the *city* which comes from God. But, like Jerusalem and Zion of old, which are, times without number, named as comprehending the *inhabitants* of Jerusalem, so here, the new Jerusalem is the *palace of the bride;* and to be shown the new city, is to be

shown a part of what was attached to and necessarily connected with the bride. Exactly in the same way as here, is the angel-interpreter introduced in chap. 17: 1 seq., and the same manner of address is here presented.

(10, 11) And he brought me, in the spirit, to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God—her luminary is like to a most precious stone, like a jasper-stone which is clear as chrystal.

Throughout the whole description of the new Jerusalem, there is a striking resemblance to that of the new city in Ezek. xl—xlviii. The mind of the writer must have been most deeply imbued with that description of the prophet. Yet he is not so close an imitator as justly to expose himself to the appellation of a *servile* copyist. While everything in Ezekiel is perfectly before his mind, he ranges the field of vision for himself, and retains, modifies, omits, or creates anew, entirely at his pleasure. Hence, while Ezekiel, after his usual copious manner, occupies nine chapters with his description of a new Jerusalem, and a new temple with its services, John occupies only twenty-three verses, into which he has compressed all that is splendid and striking, while, at the same time, some portion of it is entirely original.

Exactly as in Ezek. 40: 2, so here, the angel-interpreter brings the seer in prophetic vision to the top of a lofty mountain, in order that he might have entire command of the prospect. In Ezekiel, the city is represented as lying *toward the south* from the mountain; which has greatly perplexed commentators, because they have assumed *Zion* as the mountain on which the prophet stood. But this is manifestly erroneous; for Zion is itself the *south-western* extremity of Jerusalem. The station then must be (if a definite place must needs be assigned) on the mount of Olives, which is N. N. East from the great mass of the city of Jerusalem; or if we assume a point still further north, in the same ridge, then is the whole city in a southern direction from that point; see in Robinson's Map of Jerusalem. But in the passage before us, the direction of the city from the mountain is not mentioned, and therefore no special objection on this ground will lie against supposing mount Zion to be meant; particularly so, if we take into view the prediction of Is. 2: 2, that "in the last days the mountain of the Lord's house should be established over the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills." Still, I do not feel any need of resorting to this, as interpreters have generally done, because the prophecy of Isaiah respects the *Messianic* period, and not the end of the world. Besides, I deem nothing more to be necessary here, than to regard the seer as transported, merely for the convenience and extent of vision, to the top of some lofty mountain. It is not necessary that we should regard the *new* Jerusalem as in all re-

spects corresponding in its localities to the *old*, although much of the imagery employed to describe it is borrowed from the ancient city.—*Holy city*, etc.; see on v. 2 above.

Having the glory of God, i. e. such splendour as surrounds the presence of God = כְּבוֹד יְהוָה, which the Rabbins also call שְׁכִינָה, *Shechinah*, because it marks the place of God's inhabitation; see Ex. 40: 37—39. Num. 9: 15—23. Zech. 2: 8. comp. Is. 24: 23. This *glory*, i. e. splendour, is a "light inaccessible and full of radiance." Paul represents its reflection, at the time of his conversion, as being "brighter than the sun" itself, Acts 26: 13. This view of the splendour that surrounds the place of God's inhabitation, prepares us for the sequel, in which it is represented, that it becomes the *luminary* of the new city, sending forth a radiance which cuts off all need of the sun and moon, and entirely supersedes them; which moreover is not, like to them, liable to eclipse and changes of light.

Ὁ φωστὴρ αὐτῆς, *her luminary*, not her light or splendour. Φωστήρ is the Nom. to ἦν implied, and is a resumption of the idea comprised in δόξαν θεοῦ. When the writer asserts that the holy city was furnished with, or possessed, *the glory of God*, he means also to convey the idea, that this abiding splendour becomes itself the luminary of the place. Assuming this, he calls it in the clause before us ὁ φωστήρ, and then compares it to a most precious stone, which is luminous and diaphanous. The stone named is a jasper, pellucid and resplendent like chrystal. As there are many kinds of jasper, this *chrystallizing* one is selected for its beauty, splendour, and diaphanous nature.

(12) Having a wall great and high; having twelve gates, (and at these gates twelve angels), and names inscribed which are those of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.

Ἔχουσα, in the Nom., although its noun is in the Acc. (πόλιν), in v. 10. Such a construction, which is an emphatic one, is frequent in this book; see on ὁ μάρτυς in 1: 5; or it may be simply the participle used in the place of a verb.—*Great and high*, as may be seen in v. 17 below.—*Twelve gates*, corresponding to the twelve tribes; so in Ezek. 48: 31 seq. Over these twelve *angels* are placed as guards, i. e. they are "ministering spirits" to the new Jerusalem, as well as to the old. The names of the gates are taken from the twelve tribes, i. e. they are inscribed after the names of all the tribes of the *spiritual* Israel. So in Ezek. 48: 31 seq. The large *number* of the gates, in this case, denotes that free and ample access to the city is given.

(13) On the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

The same in Ezek. 48: 31 seq.; but there, the *order* is thus: North,

east, south, west. But in the Apocalypse, John begins with the leading quarter of the heavens, i. e. the East. As the city is *square*, v. 16, so the same number of gates is assigned to each quarter.

(14) And the wall of the city hath twelve foundation-stones, and on them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

It is not certain here, whether the writer means *twelve rows* of stones in the foundation or basis of the wall. In v. 19 seq., each of these θεμέλιοι is described as being of one of the precious stones; but still this minute description is not such as to enable us to decide, whether merely *corner-stones* are meant, or *rows of stones* in the whole foundation. The splendour of the whole is magnified, by supposing the latter to be meant. If, on the other hand, we suppose, with Ewald, that only *corner-stones* are meant, or some stones between the different gates, by way of ornament in the wall, then a kind of chequered finery seems to be the result. The whole superstructure of the wall of the city is jasper, v. 18; the material of which the city is built and paved, is pure gold, vs. 18, 21; the twelve gates are twelve pearls, v. 21. From analogy, then, it is more congruous to conclude, that θεμέλιοι here means the *rows of stones* in the foundation part of the wall; a magnificent structure indeed!

On these twelve foundation-courses of stone, are inscribed the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; so that all who approach the city may discern who are the honoured among its founders. Thus in 1 Tim. 3: 16, the church is called *the pillar and ground of the truth*, and in Gal. 2: 6, James and Cephas and John are called *pillars* by Paul. So in Eph. 2: 20, the church is represented as "*built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief-corner stone." What is thus symbolically taught, is, that the apostles were the first, leading, and most important instruments in building up the church of Christ and erecting his spiritual temple. Nor need we conclude from this, as some have done, that the apostles were all *deceased* when this book was written, and so, that John the apostle could not have written this book. We need not so judge, for the time when this new city is formed, is *after the end* of the world. Ewald, however, draws another argument from this passage against the *Johannean* origin of the book, viz. that it would be incompatible with modesty for the apostle John thus to speak of himself; and so, some other person must have written the book. But must we regard Paul as relinquishing the rules of decency and modesty, when he speaks of himself as about to receive a *crown of glory*, which the Lord the righteous Judge will give him? And is John the apostle to be taxed with want of decorum, when he speaks of himself as *the disciple whom Jesus loved*? If not, then why might not John here claim the rank which his Lord and Master had

assigned him, viz. that of being among the founders of the Christian church, and being received and regarded as such?

(15) And he who spoke with me had a golden measuring-rod, that he might measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

The simple object of measurement, in this case, is to adjust in a congruous manner all the proportions of the structures, or rather to show that they are so adjusted. So in Ezek. 40: 3—5. 42: 16. Zech. 2: 1, 2. The measuring-rod is of *gold*, which is suited to the personage who uses it, and to the nature of the occasion. It is also apparent, that with the main design of this symbol, as above stated, there is a subordinate one, which is, to ascertain the measurements so as to disclose them to the seer.

(16) And the city was square, and the length of it was as much as the breadth of it. And he measured the city with his rod, unto twelve thousand furlongs; the length and the breadth and the height were equal.

The word *τετράγωνος* alone would characterize any *four-sided* figure; hence the sequel is added, in order to show that a *square* strictly considered is meant.—*Ἐπὶ σταδίους δώδεκα χιλιάδων* Ewald solves, by separating *ἐπὶ σταδίους* (which he translates *ad stadia* or *e stadiorum mensura*) from the context, and then joining *δώδεκα χιλιάδων* with the preceding *πόλιν*. But *ἐπί* with the Acc. stands here, as often in other cases, before the *quantity* of measure, and the Gen. *δώδεκα χιλιάδων* only designates the amount of the *stadia*, thus taking the place of a numeral adjective. This is a more simple and easy method of solution.

That the *height* is equal to the length and breadth, is a peculiar circumstance, differing from the ordinary ideas of architectural proportion. Inasmuch as *eight* furlongs make a [Roman] mile, so the city must be reckoned as 375 miles square; and of course, the height of it must be the same. But how is this to be regarded? Is the whole city one great building, one temple? Not a *temple*, as v. 22 expressly assures us; not one solid mass of building, inasmuch as it has streets (v. 21), and a river and trees on its banks, etc., 22: 1 seq. We are compelled therefore to suppose, that in the mind of the seer it was regarded as containing mansions all of which were of one height, and which, from the loftiness of this height, were fitted to hold almost countless myriads of inhabitants. The question as to convenience or inconvenience of dwelling at such a height from the streets and the river, of course is not to be taken into consideration, in such a picture as this; besides that we must consider the circumstance, that *spiritual* bodies are given to all who dwell there. Everything shows, however, that all *literal* exegesis in such a case as the present, excepting merely so far as to get a proper idea of the grandeur and the congruity of the imagery, is entirely out of ques-

tion. Considered as one vast pile of buildings, the fact that the height is equal to the length or breadth, would be nothing monstrous in architecture. A house as high as it is long or broad, would surely be nothing very singular in the form of a building. But such a limitation—375 miles square—seems small indeed to contain all the redeemed, if that be true which has been predicted from the beginning, viz. that "the Seed of the woman shall bruise the Serpent's head." Yet we are relieved from any painful doubts here, by calling to mind that all is *symbol;* and moreover, that subsequent parts of the description bring to view *country* as well as city.

(17) And he measured its wall, one hundred and forty and four cubits, [according to] the measure of a man, which is that of the angel.

In chap. 7: 4, the number sealed in their foreheads so as to be saved from impending ruin, is 144,000. The *thousand* is here omitted, but the other number is retained. A wall 144,000 cubits high would be a monstrosity; particularly in the present case, where no attacks from enemies are to be guarded against; for the gates are kept continually open v. 25, and all enemies are in the lake of fire. The wall therefore seems to be introduced, in this case, rather for the purpose of completing the idea of a *city*, and making out a congruity in all its parts. One hundred and forty-four cubits = 216 feet; which is less than the height of the walls of ancient Babylon, if we are to believe the reports of historians.

That the writer adds *μέτρον ἀνθρώπου*, i. e. [*κατὰ μέτρον*, etc.], is not an unnatural circumstance. It is an *angel* who makes the measurement; and lest we might think it was a larger, or (at any rate) a different measure from that in ordinary use (*ἀνθρώπου*), the writer expressly guards us against such an error. The latter clause filled out would run thus: *ὅ ἐστιν μέτρον ἀγγέλου.*

(18) And the superstructure of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold like to pure glass.

By referring to v. 14 we see, that the foundation of the city-wall consisted of twelve rows of precious stones; of course it is only the *superstructure* which can here be spoken of. *Ἐνδόμησις* properly means, that which is *built within* anything, e. g. a mole in the midst of a harbour, as in Josephus Antiq. XV. 9. Here the nature of the case, however, decides for *superstructure.* According to this description, compared with v. 19, the bottom row of foundation stones was *jasper;* then follow eleven other courses of different precious stones; upon all these is placed the *ἐνδόμησις*, which is of entire jasper; which is of a green transparent colour, streaked with red veins. Such a conception is not wanting in magnificence.

As to the city itself, the material of it is *pure gold;* not the common gold, but gold pellucid, diaphanous, like glass; which adds much to the splendour of its appearance.

Next follows a minute description of the twelve courses of stone in the foundation of the wall. The precious stones are here particularized which constitute this basis. Of course we find among them, those which were most valued in the time when John wrote.

(19) And the foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of precious stone; the first foundation-stone was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald.

The word *adorned* may raise a doubt here, whether the writer means to say, that into the various courses of the foundation ornamental precious stones were only here and there inserted. But taking the whole description together, I do not apprehend this to have been his meaning. *Jasper*, as we have seen above, is usually a stone of green transparent colour, with red veins. But there are many varieties.—*Sapphire* is of a beautiful azure or sky-blue colour, almost as transparent and glittering as a diamond.—*Chalcedony* seems to be a species of the agate, or more probably the onyx. The onyx of the ancients was probably of a bluish white, and semipellucid.—*The emerald* was of a vivid green, and next to the ruby in hardness.

(20) The fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolithe, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysopras, the eleventh hyacinth, the twelfth amethyst.

Sardonyx is a mixture of chalcedony and cornelian, which last is of a flesh colour.—*Sardius* is probably the cornelian; sometimes, however, the red is quite vivid.—*Chrysolithe*, as its name imports, is of a yellow or gold-colour and is pellucid. From this was probably taken the conception of the pellucid gold, which constitutes the material of the city.—*Beryl* is of a sea-green colour.—The *topaz* of the present day seems to be reckoned as *yellow;* but that of the ancients appears to have been *pale green*, Plin. 38. 8. Bellermann, Urim et Thummim, p. 37.—*Chrysopras* of a pale yellow and greenish colour, like a scallion; sometimes it is classed at the present day, under *topaz*.—*Hyacinth* of a deep red or violet colour.—*Amethyst*, a gem of great hardness and brilliancy, of a violet colour, and usually found in India.

In looking over these various classes we find the first four to be of a green or bluish cast; the fifth and sixth, of a red or scarlet; the seventh, yellow; the eighth, ninth, and tenth, of different shades of the lighter green; the eleventh and twelfth of a scarlet or splendid red. There is *classification*, therefore, in this arrangement; a mixture not dissimilar to the arrangment in the rainbow, with the exception that it is more com-

plex. The splendour of such a foundation or basis of the wall, admits of no question. As to the order of the arrangement of colours, it is difficult to say what rule is followed; and mere mental conception about propriety of order, is hardly adequate to guide us. Whether this arrangement is in conformity with some ornamental arrangements of the day, which were regarded as beautiful, we cannot positively affirm, yet in itself this is highly probable. At all events, the precious stones here named were the same, beyond any reasonable doubt, which are mentioned as set into the breast-plate of the Jewish high-priest, Exod. 28: 17—20. 39: 10—13. On these stones in the breast-plate, moreover, were engraved the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, Ex. 28: 21. 39: 14; just as the names of the twelve apostles are here said to be engraved on the precious stones in the foundation, v. 14. It was not then a mere arbitrary choice of the writer among many precious stones, in the present case. Still one thing is quite plain, viz., that beyond a doubt the *most precious* of all stones were selected for the breast-plate of the high-priest, and so the same are here chosen in order to portray the splendour of the wall around the new Jerusalem. The entire familiarity of the writer with all parts of the O. Testament is everywhere manifest. The whole passage respecting the precious stones, differs from Ezek. xlviii, which does not exhibit any such view.

(21) And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each one of the gates was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

The structure of the gates makes an agreeable variety in the appearance. The pearl is quite a different material from the other precious stones which are named, and still it is very splendid, and is often classed with gems. One solid pearl of the size here required, would not, like small pearls, be frail and brittle. Moreover, the gates of this city are not intended to stand against assault. *Ornament* is all which was needful to be consulted by the writer, or considered by the reader.

Πλατεῖα, in the sing. here, is doubtless to be generically taken as designating any or all of broad transition-ways in the city. It designates all the space not occupied with the buildings. The material with which it is paved, is the same as that which is employed in the construction of the mansions, viz. *diaphanous gold.*

(22) And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God almighty is the temple thereof, and the Lamb.

But in Rev. 3: 12. 7: 15, the righteous are spoken of as dwelling in the *temple* of the heavenly world. How can this be made to harmonize with the passage before us? The solution of the difficulty is easy. There the language is figurative and the idea is generic. Its meaning

is, that they shall dwell in the divine presence, and behold the glory of God. The language is borrowed from the ancient order of things, when God manifested himself only in the most holy place of the temple. From this view of the matter it results that only the simple and generic idea of dwelling in the divine presence is intended to be conveyed in those passages. But here the description becomes specific, and we must understand the writer as denying that there will be any temple in the new Jerusalem. This is a striking point of difference between the new and old city. And why no temple? Because, according to 22: 4, *his servants shall see his face*, i. e. there shall be no veil between him and them, no inner sanctuary which can be approached but once in a year. Moreover all sacrifices for sin and all oblations will have ceased forever; and therefore the service of heaven no more needs a temple like that at Jerusalem, than *spiritual* Christianity needs such an one. As *all are kings and priests unto God*, all have the same right of access to his presence. And inasmuch as God and the Lamb are everywhere present in their glory, so every place is to the worshipper, what the temple was of old to him who frequented it. Since this is the case, it may be well and significantly said, that *God and the Lamb are the temple thereof.*

(23) And the city hath no need of the sun or of the moon, that they may shine in it, for the glory of God illuminates it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

See on v. 11, where the nature of the illumination in question is set forth. The idea is, that God and the Lamb being everywhere and always present in the new Jerusalem, and being always surrounded with "light that is full of glory," the radiance of this light far exceeds that of sun and moon, and makes perpetual day (v. 25). Even in this case, we must suppose the radiance somewhat attempered, (so to speak), in order that the inhabitants of heaven may endure it. Thus Ezekiel, 1: 28, sees the throne of divine Majesty surrounded by the iris or rainbow, in order to make the vision of it endurable.

(24) And the nations shall walk by the light thereof, and the kings of the earth shall bring their splendour and honour into it.

Here the conception of the Apocalyptist is modelled by the representations of the O. Testament, specially in the latter part of Isaiah, respecting the universal subjection of the nations to the metropolis of the church, in the Messianic period. The light which beams within the city perpetually, sheds its radiance to distant countries. The *new* world is conceived of, therefore, after the similitude of the old, i. e. as having a great metropolis, and all lands being in subjection to it. This meets the difficulty that some might feel, in respect to the apparently confined

limits of the New City.—*Φωτὸς αὐτῆς*, viz. of the city.—*The kings of the earth*, i. e. the representatives of foreign and distant nations, so to speak.—*Τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν*, their *splendid presents* or *offerings*.—*Καὶ τὴν τιμήν* is doubted by Lachmann and Knapp, but admitted by Hahn; and so I have included it in the translation. The meaning of it is, *things deemed honorary* or *honorable* by them. Thus all do cheerful homage to "the city of the great king." Comp. Is. 49: 23. 60: 10.

The nature of this representation is enough to show that all is to be considered as merely tropical. The idea which lies at the basis of all, is, that the new world in which righteousness dwells, will be splendid beyond conception, and that all who dwell in it will be of one heart and one mind, as to the offerings of homage and of gratitude which they bring to the Majesty that sits enthroned in its metropolis.

(25) And the gates thereof shall not be shut by day; for no night shall be there.

The *γάρ* here, in the second clause, cannot well be explained without adverting to the original Hebrew in Is. 60: 11, whence this passage is taken. It runs thus: "Thy gates shall stand open continually, תָּמִיד; day and night they shall not be closed." In this parallelism, *day and night*, in connection with the negative particle לֹא, mean the same as *never*. This phraseology John has abridged, and instead of *not . . . day and night* he says *not . . . days* = never. In this way the word *ἡμέρας* must be regarded as in the Acc. plural, (which I doubt not it is), and then we have, in the first clause, the simple idea: *Its gates shall never be shut.* Why? *Because* (*γάρ*) *there is no night there;* consequently there will be no need of shutting the gates to guard against surprise. If *ἡμέρας* be taken as the Gen. sing. = *during the day*, then no good account can be given of the *γαρ*. Still, I have not ventured to alter the usual translation.

(26) And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

That is, not only shall kings bring their splendid presents and gifts of honour to the New City, but all the nations under their care shall do the same. Rulers and subjects shall be of one mind in regard to the homage which they pay, and the presents which they make.

(27) And there shall not enter into it anything unclean, or that committeth abomination or falsehood; but—they who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The new city shall not, like Jerusalem of old, be open to clean and unclean, to the evilly minded and to faithful citizens; all that is unclean, base, polluting, abominable, all who mislead and deceive men by false doctrine and feigned revelations, shall be excluded. The language is borrowed from the ancient ritual, but the moral or spiritual meaning

is sufficiently obvious.—*Εἰ μή*, a plain case of the meaning *but*, viz. *but there shall enter*. Comp. *εἰ μή* in Luke 4: 26, 27 al.—*Book of life*, see on 20: 12, and places there quoted. Sentiment: The new world, created for the final abode of the righteous, will exclude all who are not of this character.

CHAPTER XXII.

(1) And he showed me a river of the water of life, pure as chrystal, issuing from the throne of God and the Lamb.*

In Gen. 2: 10 seq. we have a description of a river in Eden, for the sake of watering the garden. But the writer had in his mind the passage in Ezek. 47: 1—12, where a stream issues from under the new temple, and disparts in various directions. So here, a river issues from the throne of God and the Lamb, in the new city. The whole is modelled after the oriental manner of building palaces, near or in which a fount of water or *jet d'eau* is indispensable, for the sake of coolness and refreshment. The implication is, of course, that they who drink of these *waters of life* are immortal, i. e. will never die. See the same image in 7: 16, 17, with the remarks.—*Ἐκ τοῦ θρόνου, out from under the throne*, is plainly the meaning.

It is worthy of note how constantly the writer joins *God and the Lamb* together in all these representations. The same elevation to the throne, the same majesty, the same honour and worship, are plainly attributed to both.

(2) Between the street thereof and the river, on the one side and on the other, was the tree of life, producing twelve fruit-harvests, each month yielding its fruit-harvest; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

I have rendered *ἐν μέσῳ, between*, as in 5: 6. It is like the Hebrew בֵּין . . . וּבֵין. The writer conceives here of the river as running through the whole city; then of streets parallel to it on each side; and then, on the banks of the river, between the water and the street, the whole stream is lined on each side with two rows of the *tree of life*. The *ξύλον ζωῆς* is generic, and means something equivalent to our word *grove*.—*Producing twelve fruit-harvests*, not (as our version) *twelve manner of fruits*. In order to afford an abundant supply for all the inhabi-

* What could have induced the author of the division of the N. Testament into chapters, to disjoin the next five verses which follow, it is difficult to see. They belong inseparably to the preceding description. A new chapter should have begun with 22: 6, which commences the *epilogue* to the book. But it is useless to complain of these unskilful separations now. The Scriptures have so long been printed and quoted in their present form, that the mistake cannot well be retrieved.

tants, it bears twelve crops in a year, instead of one. We may also suppose that the trees are *lofty*, in proportion to the buildings. The succeeding clause, *each month yielding its fruit-harvest*, shows that the interpretation given is correct. It is the *abundance* of the harvests, not the *variety* of the fruit, which the writer aims to describe. In like manner the author of the book of Enoch describes Paradise, 24: 1—11. 31: 1—5. 48: 1. 60: 15. So too in 4 Ezra 2: 12. 8: 52, 53.

Nor is it the fruit only which is of use to the inhabitants of the new world. Even the leaves of the trees are sanitary to the nations. In other words; the distant nations may derive healing and life-preserving virtue from the leaves of the trees, carried abroad and distributed among them; see in 21: 24—26, where nations living at a distance are included in the new world.—Almost word for word with this representation is Ezek. 47: 12, excepting that the idea of *nations* abroad is not introduced. The gospel gives more enlarged views of privileges.

(3) And no curse shall be there; and the throne of God and the Lamb shall be therein, and his servants shall do homage to him.

No curse shall be there, may be found in Zech. 14: 11, which not improbably describes Jerusalem in the millennial day. The meaning is, that nothing which annoys, or in any way destroys or injures any object, undertaking, or person, shall be admitted into the new world. It is contrasted with the present world, on which a curse rests; Gen. 3: 17. —*The throne*, etc. *shall be in it*, i. e. shall remain, abide, be permanently in it. Before this throne, the servants of God shall render their homage and engage in the service of the heavenly world. The meaning is, that they shall do this without any hindrance or embarrassment.

(4) And they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads.

To see his face is to be admitted to his immediate presence; an honour seldom granted to private individuals by earthly sovereigns. The like view is given of heavenly privilege, in Ps. 17: 15.—As to *the name on their foreheads*, see on 2: 17. 7: 1—8. 14: 1.

(5) And there shall be no night there, neither shall they have need of a candle, nor of the light of the sun; for the Lord God shall shed light upon them, and they shall reign forever and ever.

No night shall be there is a repetition of the idea in 21: 23, 25, for the sake of intensity.—Φωτιεῖ, Fut. Attic, is to be found in some of the critical editions, instead of φωτίσει, as in Hahn. *To shed light* is the meaning here; or *to cause light*, for the *causative* is not an unfrequent meaning of Greek verbs, see Kühner, § 390. 3.—*To reign forever and ever* is to be placed in a condition immutably elevated and glorious; see the passages quoted under chap. 1: 6.

EPILOGUE: CHAP. XXII. 6—21.

[Thus ends the description of the final abode of the faithful servants of the Redeemer. The drama of the Apocalypse, if I may figuratively so name it, ends only with the final consummation of the work of redemption. The ultimate, the eternal triumph and happiness of the church are in this way fully developed. All who belong to it are brought to a state which is inconceivably glorious, and which admits of no change for the worse.

The writer now hastens to the final close of his work. The *epilogue* is brief, but pertinent and impressive. The angel-guide and interpreter reassures the seer, that all which has been disclosed is certain; and he repeats what was said in the prologue to the book respecting its design to unveil the future to the servants of God, and to disclose the blessedness of those who keep in mind what has been revealed. John, filled with reverence and astonishment, falls again at the feet of the angel to do him homage; but he is warned by the angel that he himself is only a fellow-servant of God, and a fellow-labourer with the prophets who disclose the divine will. The angel, moreover, warns him not to seal up the book, as if it were to be reserved for a distant period, before which the fulfilment of what is disclosed should not commence. On the contrary: *The time is near*, i. e. the time when the series of events commences. This command, it may be remarked, implies the truth of what has before been said, viz., that the book was written *during the disclosures*, and not afterwards.

Inasmuch as the time of fulfilment is near, the righteous are exhorted to persevere, although the wicked may still continue to oppress and injure them. The Redeemer will speedily come to deliver them, and he will bring his reward with him—his recompense both to the just and to the unjust. The obedient shall be admitted into the heavenly city and eat of the tree of life; but all the wicked and idolaters and persecutors shall be excluded.

Jesus himself is then introduced as closing the scene. He declares that he has sent his angel to make the disclosures which the book contains; and that he is the promised Messiah of the O. Testament, the Offspring of David and the Light of the world. To his promise that *he will come quickly*, the Spirit which speaks in his prophets, and the bride, i. e. the church, respond and say: Come! All moreover, who read or hear the words of the book, are exhorted to unite in the expression of the same ardent desire.

The writer closes the whole, by warning all men against adding to, or detracting from, the book which he has written. Adequate punishment will follow the commission of such an offence.

He who vouches for the truth of all that has been written, he it is who says: "Yea, I come quickly," i. e. to execute my threatenings, and fulfil all my promises. That this may speedily take place, the writer adds his own most fervent supplication: "Even so, come Lord Jesus!" The usual form of benediction, found in the epistles of Paul, concludes the whole.]

(6) And he said to me: These words are faithful and true; and the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets hath sent his angel, to show unto his servants what must speedily come to pass.

The angel-interpreter, since the prophetic *disclosures* are now at an end, reassures the seer of the visions by these words, that all which

had been shown him or revealed to him, was in accordance with fidelity to the promises of God made to his church, and was what could be fully relied upon as matter of certainty.—*Lord God of the spirits of the prophets* is the Lord who directs and enlightens the minds of the prophets, among whom the author of the book is included. That same Lord has sent his angel (see Rev. 1: 1) in order to show what will speedily come to pass, and thus encourage and console suffering Christians.

(7) Behold I come quickly! Blessed is he who keepeth in mind the words of the prophecy of this book.

I come quickly, i. e. be not impatient. Deliverance is at hand. This does not imply that all which is predicted in the book would *immediately* take place, but still it implies that the *leading* part of what was predicted would speedily come to pass, or at least so much as would liberate the persecuted church. In fact, the destruction of Jerusalem and the death of Nero were both very near at hand. The *frequency* of the assurance now before us, shows with what earnestness it was made. Thus we find it in 2: 16. 3: 11, and here, in the epilogue, in vs. 7, 12, 20.—*Τηρῶν* here, as in 1: 3, may mean *to keep* or *preserve in remembrance*, i. e. carefully to store up in the mind; or it may signify *to observe* or *obey*. But as the book is mainly *prediction*, and not precept, the former sense of the word is more apposite. The blessedness to be enjoyed on account of keeping in mind the prophecies of the book, is obviously that which would arise from the promises and encouragements which are contained in the book.

It will not escape the notice of the reader, that the words *I come quickly*, although seemingly repeated by the angel, are in reality only a part of *Christ's* message to the seer, and are beyond all question to be understood as the words of the Redeemer himself.

(8) And I John, am he who heard and saw these things; and when I had heard and seen, I fell at the feet of the angel who showed me these things in order to worship him.

The first clause has an implied verb, i. e. *εἰμί*. The participles here have the sense of the Imperf., as often elsewhere, Gramm. § 173. 2.—*Saw these things*, because most of the disclosures were made by *symbols*, which were *seen* with the prophetic eye. In the sequel, the angel is spoken of as *δεικνύοντος*, *showing*, i. e. presenting to the vision of the seer. Some of the ancients join this clause with the preceding, and understand the whole as asserting, (1) The blessedness of *ὁ τηρῶν*. (2) That of *ὁ ἀκούων*, i. e. of John. But the clause which follows renders this inadmissible.

Fell at his feet, etc. See 19: 10 with remarks, where the like scene

occurs. It doubtless presents the Apocalyptist as filled with holy wonder and rapture, to such a degree that he hardly appears to have been distinctly conscious of what he was doing. In the present instance, he seems to have entertained some suspicion, perhaps, that it was Christ himself who made his appearance in the form of an angel. The declaration: Ἔρχομαι ταχύ, might easily give rise to such a conjecture on his part.

(9) And he saith to me: See thou do it not; I am a fellow-servant of thee and of thy brethren the prophets, and of those who keep in mind the words of this book; worship God.

See on 19: 10. The angel here declares, that he is only one of the *servants* of God, in common with prophets and true Christians, and therefore is not entitled to the religious homage which is proffered. God is the only and proper object of such homage.

(10) And he saith to me: Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is near.

Seal not up the words, etc. To seal up means to secure and preserve entire for future use. So did Isaiah with one of his prophecies, 8: 1—16, comp. 30: 8, and Hab. 2: 2, 3. So Daniel sealed up his vision, because it respected a distant future time, 8: 26. 12: 4, 9. See a similar process of laying aside, in 4 Ezra, 12: 37, 38. 14: 26. But in the case before us, as the close of the verse admonishes us, *the time*, i. e. the time of fulfilment, *is near at hand*, and therefore the book is not to be sealed up, because it will be put to immediate use. Not that *all* in the book (which extends down to the judgment day) is to be immediately fulfilled, but that the fulfilment of a substantial part of the long series of events predicted is speedily to commence; as in truth it did. How entirely they overlook the plan and object of this book, who date the fulfilment of chap. vi. seq. several centuries later than the book, or at a remote period, is sufficiently manifest.

(11) Let him who acteth unjustly, act unjustly still, and let him who is defiled defile himself still; yet let the righteous still do righteously, and he that is holy be still holy.

The sentiment seems plainly to be this: Be it that persecutors and vile men shall continue without remission, for a while longer, their oppressive and debasing practices, yet let not the righteous be shaken in his constancy, nor the holy man cease in any measure from the pursuit of sanctification. The reason, which is given in the next verse, is, that the oppression of the wicked will speedily cease, and their abominations receive a due reward. It is an earnest exhortation to perseverance, accompanied, in the context, by adequate encouragement.—

The reader will readily notice the strong antithesis there is between *ἀδικῶν ἀδικήσατο* and *δίκαιος δικαιοσύνην ποιησάτω*, also between *ῥυπαρὸς ῥυπαρευθήτω* and *ἅγιος ἁγιασθήτω*.

(12, 13) Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

Here comes out fully the reason, why the righteous are encouraged to persevere in their course. Their reward is speedy and certain. So, on the other hand, the punishment of the wicked is certain; for *to every one* there will be recompense according to the nature of his work. He who promises this is immutable and eternal, i. e. he who promises is Jesus Christ who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." That the same predicates are applied to the living God, and can belong only to such a Being, is clear from Is. 41: 4. 43: 10. 44: 6. 48: 12. Comp. Rev. 21: 6. As to the *form* of the promise: *I come quickly*, etc., comp. Is. 40: 10. 62: 11, where the same is found.

It is evident here, from the nature of the case, that the speaker is *Jesus*, although he is not named before v. 16. Yet it is clear beyond all question, that the angel-interpreter is not the speaker in his own name. He had just solemnly disclaimed any right to the homage of John, on the very ground that he was a mere creature and a fellow-servant with other worshippers of God. To suppose, then, that he here claims to himself the incommunicable attributes of self-existence and eternity absolute, would be preposterous. Accordingly, all recent interpreters of note begin the address of the Messiah here; even Eichhorn, Heinrichs, and Ewald do the same. Besides, whoever has made himself acquainted with the idiom of this book, must know that the introduction of a speaker without naming him, is a frequent usage of the writer. If any one insists, that it is the angel who still speaks, there is no serious objection to this, provided that we regard him as merely repeating the words of the Messiah.

(14) Blessed are they who do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

That is, the obedient shall have a place in the heavenly city, and be made happy there by free access (*ἐξουσία*) to the tree of life.—*Αὐτοῦ* after *ἐντολάς*, as spoken by Christ, would seem most naturally to refer to God.—*Ἵνα ἔσται*, i. e. *ἵνα* with the Fut. Indic.; comp. John 17: 2. This is not common, yet it is not without precedent, inasmuch as the Fut. Indic. not unfrequently takes the place of the Subj. mode; see in Winer's Gramm. § 42. b. 1.—*Enter in, τοῖς πυλῶσιν, by means of the gates*, i. e. free access will be given to them, or the gates are open to them at all times.

(15) Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and fornicators, and murderers, and idolaters, and every one who loveth and maketh a lie.

See on 21: 8, where these appellations are explained with the exception of *dogs*. This animal was unclean, and therefore odious to the Jews; comp. Deut. 23: 18. Hence persons of a vile and injurious character were called *dogs*, Phil. 3: 2. Perhaps the writer here means *cynaedi*. At all events it is plain here, that the leading characteristics of the heathen persecutors are mentioned; certainly it is not intended to be said, that no other classes of wicked persons than those here named, will be shut out from the heavenly city. But a place in heaven has just been promised to the obedient and persevering Christian, and now *exclusion* from it is threatened to their enemies and persecutors.—*Loving and doing falsehood* here refers to the false doctrines of idolaters, "who exchanged the true God for a false one," Rom. 1: 25.

(16) I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things on account of the churches. I am the root-shoot and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.

Here the speaker names himself, so that all doubt is of course removed. *Sending the angel* is mentioned also in Rev. 1: 1.—*On account of the churches;* Ewald says, *in the seven churches.* But I apprehend ἐπί does not mean *in*, when found in such a connection. It is a more important meaning, also, when we suppose it to indicate *for the sake of, on account of*, a meaning by no means unfrequent; see Lex.—*Root-shoot*, ῥίζα, not *root*, as our version has it. The meaning which I have given it is clear, if we refer to Is. 11: 1, "There shall go forth a rod from the trunk of Jesse, and a shoot shall spring up from his roots." What the speaker designs to say is, that he is the true Messianic progeny of David, foretold in the ancient Scriptures.

The bright and morning star, i. e. a king all resplendent and glorious like to the morning star. Comp. 2 Sam. 21: 17. Is. 14: 2. Num. 24: 17. Dan. 12: 3. It is the splendour and beauty of the morning star, which makes it here an object of comparison with the splendour of the king of Zion. It is not simply its *light*, or its being the *harbinger of day*, viewed as furnishing an image of Christ as the Light, i. e. the Teacher, of the world, which is here meant; for in this respect he is the *Sun* of righteousness, not the morning star.

(17) And the Spirit and the bride say: Come! And let him that heareth say: Come! And let him that is athirst come; whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

That is, the Spirit which animates and guides the prophets, and the Bride, i. e. the church, who is anxiously hoping for the coming of Christ,

unite in the fervent wish expressed by *Ἔρχου*!—*Let him that heareth say: Come!* i. e. let all to whom the words of this book are read, unite in the same ardent wish and prayer.—*Let him that is athirst, come!* Let him who strongly desires the "waters of life which flow from the throne of God and the Lamb" (22: 1. 21: 6), come and drink of them freely. In other words: The gospel invites all to believe, and to partake of its precious blessings.

(18) I testify to every one who heareth the words of the prophecy of this book: If any one shall add to these things, God will add to him the plagues which are described in this book.

Having completed his work, the author now proceeds to guard against corruption of it, either by addition or subtraction. Earnest he must have been, in order to make so solemn a prohibition and threaten so dreadful a penalty as his words disclose. The practice of tampering with books of such a nature, would seem to have been somewhat frequent in the region where the Apocalypse was published. Otherwise, there would be something not perfectly natural, in the severity of the interdict before us.

Adding to the book means the insertion of new matter. The *paronomasia* in *ἐπιθήσει . . . ἐπ' αὐτόν, shall lay upon him*, is very plain in the original. I have imitated it in the version.

(19) And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part of the tree of life and of the holy city, which are described in this book.

Here the fault which is the opposite of *addition* is brought to view, viz., that of *removing* or *exscinding* any part or portion of the book. This is to be followed by a corresponding punishment, viz., a loss of all that portion of good which is assigned by the book of life. Here the paronomasia, again, is manifest as before.

The idea which many entertain, that this verse, at the close of our volume of the Scriptures, extends to the whole of the Old Testament and of the New, is sufficiently refuted by the fact, that when the Apocalypse was written, no *united whole* of the N. Testament Scriptures had been made. It was not until the second half of the second century, that this appears to have been done. The author therefore could have had no reference to it. And although it be true, that any designed falsification of the O. Testament, or of the New, must be highly criminal in the sight of God, yet this general truth is not what the author aims to express here. He means to prohibit, in the most solemn manner, all tampering with his own work.

(20) He who beareth testimony to these things saith: Yea, I come quickly! Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

Ὁ μαρτυρῶν is Christ. Thus Christ often speaks of the Father as μαρτυρῶν respecting him, i. e. as vouching for the reality and divine authenticity of his mission. So here; the Saviour himself vouches for the truth of what John has disclosed. He makes the appeal, also, for confirmation of this, to his speedy coming; for by this all might know whether John had spoken the truth.

To this solemn promise of a speedy advent, John subjoins his fervent wish that it might take place; *Amen!* i. e. let it be verified. *Come, Lord Jesus!* Let the promise of thy speedy advent be fulfilled, so that all shall acknowledge the truths for which thou hast vouched, and all shall behold thy church triumphant, and thy glory filling the whole earth!

(21) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints!

This is the usual form of benediction in the epistles of the N. Testament. It contains a wish or prayer on the part of him who utters it, that the favour of Christ, in all respects, may be bestowed on those in whose behalf the prayer is made. Here it has special reference, as we may well suppose, to the blessings disclosed and promised in the book before us.

EXCURSUS I.

*Angelology of the Scriptures.**

Rev. I. 1. *Καὶ ἐσήμανεν ἀποστειλὰς διὰ τοῦ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννῃ.*—v. 4. . . . *ἀπὸ τῶν ἑπτὰ πνευμάτων.*

No book in the Old Testament or the New so often introduces the agency of angels as the Apocalypse. They constitute, if I may be allowed to speak in the language of rhetoricians, the principal *machinery* of this great moral Epopee. Angels are the companions and interpreters of the seer, throughout his visions. Their interposition is announced in the inscription to the book, and declared again near its close, 22: 16. They are everywhere brought forward to our view, either as the executioners of divine justice, or as fulfilling the will of God and the Redeemer by becoming instruments in protecting the church, and making it victorious over all its enemies and persecutors.

Has the writer now, in all this, conformed to the spirit of his times and to the usage of the Scriptures? Or has he invented for himself a machinery which is novel, and which has no parallel in other productions of the period in which he wrote? In other words: Is all this the mere offspring of his own vivid and fruitful imagination; or is it the result of introducing agencies familiar and in general well understood at the time when he wrote, but modified in a degree, by his own conceptions and by the manner of representation appropriate or peculiar to himself, as to many of the nicer and more distinctive traits?

These questions may be easily answered, by a proper survey of the *angelology* of the Scriptures, and of other early productions. And inasmuch as the structure of the Apocalypse, and (with respect to many passages) the right interpretation of it, depends on a correct view of

* The substance of this Excursus has already been printed in a somewhat enlarged form, in Vol. I. of the *Bibliotheca Sacra;* but as many who may read the Commentary on the Apocalypse will not probably have access to it as there exhibited; and as I have often referred to it in my remarks on many passages in the Apocalypse; I have deemed it necessary to reprint it here, but in a form somewhat abridged.

ancient angelology, it seems important here, for the aid of the reader, to place before him a sketch of this subject.

In regard to the real existence of angels, good and evil, it is not necessary for me to enter into any discussion. The consideration of this topic is appropriate to the province of doctrinal *theology*. I may therefore dismiss it with but two or three suggestions.

It is plainly *beyond* the province of human reason, unenlightened by revelation, to determine *for* or *against* the real existence of angels good or evil. They do not develope themselves to our senses. They are not the immediate objects of our proper cognisance. Their existence is not a necessary one, like that of the Maker of heaven and earth. Consequently we can know nothing which is absolutely certain respecting them, except it is *revealed* to us.

Plainly our reason cannot decide *against* their real existence; for all our sources of argument in defence of such a position, must be comprised in *analogy* and must depend on it; and in an analogy to that which is the proper object of our cognisance. But if we go from man downward toward the lower species of living creatures, we find a *continued gradation* of being, even down to the lowest. Should we apply this analogy in the other direction, and go upwards toward the great Supreme, what forbids the supposition that there are intermediate beings between us and Him? If reason simply can decide anything, the presumption would seem to be, that angelic, or at any rate superior and intermediate, beings between us and the Godhead do exist.

At all events, so the Bible seems most clearly to teach us. For the sake of perspicuity, I shall arrange the biblical doctrine, in respect to this subject, under distinct heads which will aid us in the proper conception of it.

I. Good Angels.

(1) *They are very numerous.* "Thousand thousands ministered unto him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him," Dan. 7: 10. The like in Ps. 68: 17. 2 K. 6: 16, 17. "An innumerable company of angels," Heb. 12: 22. Matt. 26: 53. Jude v. 14. Rev. 5: 11.

(2) *Angels accompany the divine Majesty and the Saviour, and take part in all the peculiarly glorious displays which they make, either in the way of mercy or of judgment.* (*a*) At the giving of the Law, on mount Sinai; Heb. 2: 2. Acts 7: 53. Gal. 3: 19. Deut. 33: 2. Ps. 68: 17. (*b*) They accompany the Saviour, when Jerusalem is destroyed by his power; Matt. 24: 30, 31. (*c*) At the final judgment; Matt. 13: 39—41. 25: 31. 1 Thess. 4: 16. 2 Thess. 1: 7—9.

(3) *Angels are the guardians of individuals and of nations.* (*a*) *Of* the Lord Jesus Christ, from his conception till his death; Luke 1: 11—

20, 26—38. Matt. 1: 20, 21. 2: 13, 19, 20. 4: 11. (This guardianship is recognized in Matt. 4: 6). John 1: 51. Luke 22: 43. Matt. 28: 2—7. Mark 16: 5—7. Acts 1: 10, 11. (*b*) Of individuals; Matt. 18: 10, "Their angels [viz. the angels of infants] do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven," i. e. to little children a special guardianship of presence-angels or archangels is assigned. Here the phrase *do always behold the face*, etc., is of the same import as the phrase *before his throne*, so often introduced in the Apocalypse. So Heb. 1: 14. Ps. 34: 7. Acts 12: 7—15. Gen. 32: 1, 2. 2 Kings 6: 17. (*c*) Of nations and kingdoms; Ex. 14: 19. 23: 20. 33: 2. Num. 20: 16. Josh. 5: 13. Is. 63: 9. Dan. 10: 5—13, 20, 21, where the angel, who was one of the guardians of the Jews, represents himself as struggling with the prince of Persia, in order that he might obtain the liberation of the Jews (v. 13). He promises also to renew the contest (v. 20), and indicates his success by declaring that "the prince of Greece will come," i. e. to overthrow the Persian empire. Here also Michael in particular is designated as the *prince* of the Jews; and in Dan. 12: 1, he is represented as 'the great prince who standeth for the people of God.' So in Jude (v. 9), Michael is represented as 'contending with Satan about the body of Moses,' and of course as being the defender of God's chosen people. In Rev. 12: 7, Michael and his angels are represented as contending with the devil and his angels, who are in pursuit of the child [Jesus], "who is caught up to the throne of God." So again in Dan. 11: 1, the guardian angel of the Jews stands by and strengthens the king of Persia, in his kind intentions with respect to the Jews. In Zech. 1: 8—14 the guardian angel of the Jews is developed, as active and efficient in providing for their welfare and safety. Again, in Zech. 3: 1, 2, the angel of the Lord, i. e. the guardian angel of the Jews, rebukes Satan for his malignant intention toward Joshua the high-priest. And while Michael is thus employed in defending the Lord's people, Gabriel seems to be the *angel-interpreter* or *messenger* sent to make disclosures to men, respecting nations or individuals. Thus in Dan. 8: 16 seq. 9: 21 seq. Luke 1: 19—26. So in Job 33: 23, מַלְאָךְ מְלִיץ, *an angel, an interceder*, a part of whose business it is to show to men the divine uprightness. See also the case of the guardian angel of God's people, who rebuked Balaam, Num. 22: 22—35.

From all this it is fully apparent, that not only the Jews, but other nations have their guardian angels; that not only the Saviour, and the saints, but little children even, had or have their guardian angels. Acts 12: 7—15 develops the manner in which this subject was viewed by the Jews in common life, in a very vivid manner.

(4) *Angels are employed as special ministers for executing divine justice.* Many of the passages already referred to under the last head,

fully exhibit the correctness of this position. Besides these, one may examine Gen. 19: 1—23, comp. with Gen. 18: 1, 2. Ex. 12: 23, where הַמַּשְׁחִית probably designates *the angel-destroyer*. Josh. 5: 13, 14. 2 Sam. 24: 16, 17. 2 Kings 19: 35. Acts 12: 23. Rev. vii—xi, the seven angels are provided with the seven trumpets, which are the signals of destruction. Rev. xvi, the seven angels pour out the seven vials which are full of divine wrath.

(5) *The different elements seem to be watched over and governed, by angels assigned to the execution of such an office.* Thus in Rev. 7: 1, 2, the four angels over the four winds are addressed. Rev. 14: 18, "Another angel came out from the altar, who had power over the fire," i. e. who presided over the fire of the altar. Rev. 16: 7, "And I heard the *altar* saying;" i. e. the angel who presides over the altar, and probably the same which is mentioned in the preceding passage. Rev. 16: 5, "I heard the angel of the waters say." It seems probable that the passage Ps. 104: 4 and Heb. 1: 7, "Who maketh his angels the winds, and his ministers a flame of fire," i. e. lightning, is to be explained in reference to the views of the Jews as connected with the subject of guardian angels over the elements. Rev. 19: 17, "the angel standing in the sun," may not unnaturally be explained of the angel who presides over the orb of day.

(6) *Angels were regarded as intercessors for men.* The passage already cited, Job 33: 23, מַלְאָךְ מֵלִיץ, *the angel, the interceder*, shows in what light some of the angels were regarded. So in Zech. 1: 12, 13, the intercession of the guardian-angel of the Jews is recorded. In Rev. 8: 3, an angel takes his station by the altar in heaven, having a golden censer, and with this he presents "much incense . . . with the prayers of all the saints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne." (A case of somewhat different nature is that of the twenty-four elders in Rev. 5: 8). Other Jewish productions of the first century develop the same views, in relation to this subject; e. g. in the Book of Enoch, 9: 3, the archangels are thus addressed, in behalf of those who were oppressed by the giants before the flood: "And now to you, O ye holy ones of heaven, the souls of men complain, saying: Obtain justice for us with the Most High. Then they said to the Lord: Thou art Lord of lords, etc.;" after which follows a long intercession. So in Enoch, 47: 2, the holy ones assemble, i. e. the archangels, "and with united voice petition, etc., . . . the Lord of spirits on account of the blood of the righteous which has been shed;" and at the same time they 'ask that the prayers of the righteous may not be intermitted before the Lord of spirits;' which compares well with Rev. 8: 3. In Enoch 97: 4, the prayers of the righteous are said to rise up in remembrance, and to "be deposited in testimony before the angels." In Enoch 40: 6, the

presence-angel, Gabriel, is represented as "petitioning and praying for those who dwell on earth and supplicate the Lord of spirits."

In like manner the Testament of the XII. Patriarchs represents this subject. In Test. Levi c. 3, the writer is describing the seven heavens. "In the fifth are the angels of the presence of God, who minister and make propitiatory offerings to the Lord for all the sins of ignorance committed by the righteous. They offer to the Lord sweet incense, a rational and bloodless offering." In Test. Levi c. 5 is another passage, which represents the angel that accompanies Levi into the heavenly world, as being requested by Levi to give his name, so that in the day of tribulation he might call upon him. He answers thus: "I am the angel who intercedes for pardon in respect to the nations of Israel, that they may not be wholly cut off, etc." So in Tobit 12: 12, 15, Raphael speaks of himself as offering before God the prayer of Tobit and Sarah his wife; and again, as being "one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints before the Most High."

These passages from contemporary Christian writings show that John is not singular in his views respecting angels, when he presents one of them (in Rev. 8: 3) as offering up incense before God, accompanied by the prayers of the saints. The incense is a symbol of the acceptable nature of such intercession.

Such is the outline of the scriptural doctrine in respect to *good angels*, as employed by God in the government of the world, the protection of his church, and the infliction of punishment upon the wicked. Let us now consider the case,

II. Of Evil Angels.

(1) *These are numerous.* Matt. 25: 41, "The devil and his angels." Matt. 12: 26, where Satan is represented as only *primus inter pares*, in respect to demons, *δαιμόνια*. Mark 5: 9, "For we are many;" spoken, however, in a somewhat limited sense. The principal evidence lies in the fact, that the Scriptures represent men everywhere, in all parts of the world, as tempted and misled by evil spirits. If this is true, they must be numerous.

(2) *They were originally good, but sinned, and fell from their first estate.* Jude v. 6, "The angels who kept not their original state (*τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχήν*), but forsaking their proper habitation, he [the Lord] hath kept by eternal chains in a dark place, unto the judgment of the great day." 2 Peter 2: 4, "If God spared not the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell, etc." The fact, that all which God originally created was good, and also his own spotless and benevolent nature, serve to confirm this view of the subject.

(3) *Among the evil angels, one is more distinctly marked and made*

very prominent in the Scriptures. In the O. Testament he is called, (*a*) *Satan* (הַשָּׂטָן), *the adversary;* e. g. Job 1: 6—12. 2: 1—7. 1 Chron. 21: 1. Zech. 3: 1, 2. In the N. Testament; Matt. 12: 26. Mark 4: 15. Luke 22: 3. Acts 5: 3. Rom. 16: 20, and often elsewhere, specially in the Apocalypse. (*b*) *The tempter;* in accordance with which he is very frequently set forth as enticing or tempting men to sin; e. g. Matt. 4: 1—11. 13: 19. Luke 22: 3, 53. Acts 5: 3. 1 Cor. 7: 5. 1 Thess. 3: 5. 2 Cor. 11: 3. Rev. 12: 9. 20: 2, 8, 10. (*c*) *The destroyer*, *ἀπολλύων*, אֲבַדּוֹן; Rev. 9: 11. (*d*) *The devil*, *ὁ διάβολος*, i. e. the accuser, the calumniator. This designation is too frequent to need any references. All these names imply bad character, and malignant influence upon men. Even before the N. Testament was written, the name *destroyer*, as applied to Satan, was current among the Jews; e. g. Tobit 3: 8, where Asmodaeus, = אַשְׁמְדַי (from שָׁמַד *to destroy*), is the name of the demon who afflicts the house of Raguel. The most usual name in the early Rabbinic writings, is Samael, סַמָּאֵל, the angel of death, the destroyer = *ἀπολλύων*. So the Targums, the Zohar, Rabboth, etc.; and so in the *Ascension of Isaiah*, written during the first century, ch. 1: 8, 11 al. (See Dr. Laurence's remarks on this, p. 162 seq.) The etymology of סַמָּאֵל seems to be obscure; for סַמָּא means *to blind*, with which, however, one might compare 2 Cor. 4: 4. More probable is the derivation from סַמָּא, *venenum*, and אֵל, *mighty*, sc. mighty in destruction. In Job i. ii, in Zech. iii, and in Rev. 12: 10, the peculiar traits of character which gave occasion to the name *ὁ διάβολος*, *the calumniator*, are prominently developed.

(4) *The extent of Satan's power in the world, united with that of other malignant spirits, is frequently represented as being very great.* In 2 Cor. 4: 4, he is called *the god of this world*, in reference to his predominating influence. In John 12: 31, *the prince of this world;* so in John 14: 30. In Eph. 6: 12, Satan and his associates are called *ἀρχάς, ἐξουσίας, κοσμοκράτορας, τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας*; in Col. 1: 13, *ἐξουσία τοῦ σκότους*. Comp. also Rev. 12: 17. 20: 8. Still, this extensive influence is the result of corruption in men, rather than of any irresistible power in Satan himself: inasmuch as we are expressly commanded to resist him, and are told that in such a case *he will flee from us*, James 4: 7. 1 Pet. 5: 8, 9. Eph. 4: 27.

(5) PLACE *of evil spirits, before the general judgment.* This is variously represented in the N. Testament, and needs a careful scrutiny. The usual notions on this subject are indistinct, and need to be remodelled.

(*a*) THE ABYSS. The word *ἄβυσσος* means *without bottom*, or *unfathomable.* The idea of the Hebrews respecting it was that of a deep dark pit or chasm in the earth, which was, or might be, closed up, and

where *darkness* perpetually reigned. Hence Jude (v. 6): "angels . . . kept in perpetual chains *ὑπὸ ζόφον*, *under* or *beneath darkness*," i. e. in the deep and dark abyss. So also 2 Pet. 2: 4, "Casting them into Tartarus, in chains of darkness," i. e. casting them bound into a deep and dark place. With this corresponds the word *abyss*, so often employed in connection with Satan; e. g. Luke 8: 31, the demon beseeches Jesus not to order him away *into the abyss*; which would be a special punishment for his offence. Matt. 8: 29, "tormenting us before the time," i. e. before the judgment of the great day, seems to refer to the same kind of punishment as the preceding passage. In Rev. 9: 11, Abaddon or Apollyon is called *the angel of the abyss*. In Rev. 9: 1, this abyss is represented as usually closed and locked up. In Rev. 17: 8, the beast, who is the coadjutor of Satan, is represented as emerging from the abyss. In Rev. 20: 1—3, Satan is said to be cast into the abyss, locked up there, and confined for a thousand years. This in v. 9, is called his *φυλακή*. But,

(*b*) The Scriptures also speak of other places in which evil spirits are compelled to dwell, in the way of punishment. These are the DESERTS. Is. 13: 21 represents Babylon as about to be so entirely deserted as to become the abode of שְׂעִירִים, *forest-devils*, i. e. demons who dwell in deserts. In Is. 34: 14, Idumea is threatened with a desolation so complete, that the שָׂעִיר and the לִילִית, *male and female forest demon* (according to the popular belief) should dwell therein. In exact accordance with this, Rev. 18: 2 threatens the spiritual Babylon with becoming *κατοικητήριον δαιμόνων*. So in Matt. 12: 43, "the unclean spirit [when expelled] walks through *ἀνύδρων τόπων*, *dry* or *desert places*, seeking rest and finding none," i. e. such a spirit, when cast out, is obliged to wander for a while in banishment from places inhabited by men, and is not permitted to exert his usual influence over them. When the Evangelist, therefore, lays the scene of our Saviour's temptation in the *desert* or *wilderness* (Matt. iv.), the representation is altogether appropriate.—In like manner, as in Matt. 12: 43, the book of Tobit (8: 3) represents Asmodaeus, when cast out by Raphael, as fleeing "*εἰς τὰ ἀνώτατα* of Egypt," i. e. into the deserts of that region, which are wild and dreary. So too in Baruch 4: 35, [the desolate city] "shall be inhabited by demons, for a long time." The book of Enoch, 10: 6, 7, exhibits the same view: "The Lord said to Raphael, Bind Azazel [one of the leading apostate angels] hand and foot; cast him into darkness; and, *opening the desert* in Dudael, cast him in there." Nothing can be plainer than the fact, that such an opinion existed anciently among the Jews, even so far back as the days of Isaiah, or at any rate so far back as the time when Is. xiii. and xxxiv. were written.

(*c*) THE AIR. In Eph. 2: 2, Satan is named *ἄρχων τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ*

ἀέρος, the prince of the aerial host, i. e. of the host which inhabits the air. On this text Oecumenius observes: 'He is called the prince of the power of the air, because an aerial nature dwells in him; he cannot abide in heaven, for he is evil, nor on earth, for he is not human.' So in Eph. 6: 12: "Our struggle . . . is with principalities, with powers, with the rulers of this benighted world, with evil spirits in the aerial regions, *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*;" for that *ἐπουρανίοις may* have such a meaning, is plain enough from the signification of שָׁמַיִם and *οὐρανός*, both of which frequently mean the *airy region;* and that it *must* have such a meaning here, is plain enough from the consideration, that Paul cannot represent the Christian struggle as being with *good* angels who dwell in heaven.

So in other nearly contemporary works; e. g. the Ascension of Isaiah, 7: 9—13, the prophet, as he is ascending to heaven, sees Samael [Satan] and his powers violently contending, below the firmament, with each other. Again in 10: 29, the prince of this world is represented as dwelling "in the region of the firmament," i. e. *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*, the upper regions of the air. In Test. Benj. c. 3 (p. 729, Fabricius, Cod. Apoc. I.) it is said: "He who fears God and loves his neighbour, cannot be stricken *ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀερίου πνεύματος, τοῦ Βελιάρ*," i. e. by the spirit of the air, Belial.

In like manner Philo Judaeus: "Those, whom other philosophers call *δαίμονας*, Moses is wont to name *ἀγγέλους*; for they are *ψυχαὶ κατὰ τὸν ἀέρα πετόμεναι*," de Gigant. p. 266, ed. Mangey. Even the heathen entertained similar views in respect to the *locality* of incorporeal beings. Diogenes Laertius (de Pythag. VII. 1. 32) says of that philosopher, that he maintained, "that all the air is full of *ψυχαί*, and that he supposed these to be demons and heroes." Plutarch (Quest. Rom. p. 274. ed. Francof.) says, that "the upper and lower air is filled with gods and demons."

How such views came to prevail among the Jews, seems not to be a very difficult question. Spirits, רוּחוֹת, *πνεύματα*, have the same designation as the *air* or *atmosphere;* and this, because they were regarded as consisting of aerial or tenuous and impalpable substance, like the air. Hence the air was regarded as a congenial element. But there was also another reason which had some weight. In *heaven* apostate spirits could not live, because they were wicked; in the abyss beneath or the bottomless pit they could not always be, inasmuch as they could not then entice and corrupt men; on the surface of the earth they could not abide, because that is the abode of material human beings; and therefore the aerial region was the only place left which seemed appropriate to them. Here, consequently, the common and popular demonology located them; and the Apocalyptist, and other N. Testament

writers, have adverted to them in a popular way; just as Isaiah has done in ch. xiii. and xxxiv. How much of all this is *costume*, and how much simple reality, is another question, on which something will be said in the sequel.

(*b*) *Evil spirits are sometimes employed as the executioners of divine justice, or as inflicting chastisement.* Thus as related in Job i. ii, Satan is permitted to afflict that patriarch. In 1 Kings 22: 21—23, the spirit who offers to deceive Ahab, is perhaps an evil spirit. In the Gospels numerous cases of demoniacal influence in producing disease and occasioning many evils, everywhere present themselves to our notice. These are declared by the Saviour to be under the guidance of Satan, and his coöperation with them is explicitly developed, Matt. 12: 24—28. Prominent is the idea of Satan's agency even in salutary chastisement, 1 Cor. 5: 5; although, like the king of Assyria and Nebuchadnezzar when they invaded Judea, he may not wish, or even expect, to fulfil the designs of heaven. The same sentiment is also found in 1 Tim. 1: 20. That Satan should be intent with great zeal upon promoting the persecution of good men, might be expected from his temper and character; and such is often represented as being the case, e. g. Rev. 2: 13. In Rev. 13: 2 seq. the *dragon* is represented as giving power to the beast, and as exciting him to persecute the church and to inflict all manner of evil upon Christians. So in the Gospels; Satan stirs up Judas to betray the Saviour, and "the powers of darkness have their hour," i. e. their season of success, when they rouse up the Jews and Romans to put him to death.

Such are the brief outlines of scriptural angelology. It may be proper, now, before this sketch is concluded, to notice some apparent difficulties that attend a part of it.

'How,' it is asked, 'can evil spirits be in the *abyss*, or in the *desert*, or in the *air*, and at the same time be busily engaged in tempting and injuring men?' The answer to this question is less difficult, perhaps, than the inquirer may seem to imagine. Their confinement in the *abyss* is not constant or perpetual, but *temporary*. So Luke 8: 31, Rev. 20: 1—3, and other passages also, clearly indicate. The same is true of exile to *desert places;* Matt. 12: 43—45. As to the *air;* this seems to be the appropriate element (so to speak) of evil spirits, i. e. the place where they more usually reside, and thus have an opportunity of assailing men and doing them mischief. If it is the arrangement of Providence, in order to try men, that evil spirits should be permitted to tempt and to injure them, (and clearly do the Scriptures show that it is), then those spirits must be resident or existent somewhere, so that they can accomplish this. The Hebrews thought and spoke of them as inhabiting the *air*, because this was most consonant, according to their

view, with their *pneumatic* nature. That now and then, when some peculiar act of malignity is committed on their part, they are sent to the *abyss*, or to the *desert*, and thus removed from opportunity to assail men, is nothing strange—nothing contrary to the analogy of divine judgments, which often chastise and sometimes punish wicked men, even in the present world. To assume that all these declarations of the Scriptures, which are apparently plain and direct, have no foundation in point of fact or reality, is to assume that which no man can prove. There is no improbability in the scriptural views of this subject, when it is once conceded that evil angels exist, and are engaged in doing mischief.

'But is not all this mere *costume?* Is anything more meant, than that the evil passions of men and the destructive powers of the natural world are personified?'

In the *reality* of evil spirits I am, and must be, a full believer. *Costume* some of the modes of representation may be, and probably are. Is it not *costume*, when God is spoken of as having hands, arms, eyes, mouth, feet, heart; as being the subject of anger, jealousy, revenge, repentance, hatred, etc.; as using bow, and arrows, and quiver, and sword, and buckler; as having wings and feathers, and the like? Undoubtedly it is; but at the basis of all this, there is *reality*. God is a living and active agent, possessed of all the affections belonging to a perfect, intelligent, rational, and moral being, and ready and able to punish the wicked and protect and reward the righteous. Such are the substantial facts that lie beneath the biblical costume. And why not reason in the same way respecting evil spirits? They exist; they are active in doing evil to men; they are permitted to assail and tempt them. Why not, as well as that men should in other ways be tempted to do evil? The power of evil spirits, moreover, is resistible by men; as resistible as other temptations, James 4: 7. 1 Pet. 5: 8. Eph. 4: 27. And who is able to say, that they are not occasionally restrained from the exercise of this power, in the way of temporary punishment, and thus made to feel that there is a Power above which abhors their wickedness? The manner of representing this may be *costume*. The Hebrews conceived of their punishment, by supposing them to be sent to the *abyss*, or to the *desert;* but, so long as they had access to men, they were conceived of as living in the *air*, inasmuch as they could not live in heaven, nor (like men) on earth, nor be in the abyss or the desert, which would keep them away from men. Where else could they be, then, but in the *air?* *Where*, I mean, according to the Hebrew modes of conception.

And how, I may in my turn ask, can we read the Scriptures, and perceive that all the objects of the invisible world are represented to us

in the costume which is worn by *objects of sense;* God himself as possessed of human parts and passions; heaven as a pleasure-garden, a splendid city, and its enjoyments as feasts; hell as a lake of fire, or an abyss, a prison, a place of utter darkness; the sun as rising and setting at the beginning and close of his march through the heavens, and so of the moon and stars; the rain as treasured up in the region above the solid welkin, from whence it descends through windows or apertures; the earth as standing upon the great abyss of waters beneath, and as being an extended plain; the apparent heavens as a solid arch extended over it, and resting at the edges of the earth on pillars which support that arch,—how, I say, can we observe all this, and much more of the same kind in the Bible, and yet falter, and hesitate, and deny, when the agency of evil spirits, and the places of their usual abode, or of their punishment, are presented in costume such as has been disclosed above? Is it objected, that the N. Testament writers have adopted the popular *usus loquendi* respecting evil spirits? Have they not done the same, as to God, and heaven, and hell, and earth and sea and all which inhabit them? They have; and such objections, therefore, are both irrelevant and insignificant. When the Hebrews speak of evil spirits as in the abyss, in the desert, or in the air, we are to understand, that in the two former cases they meant to convey the idea of a temporary exile and restraint of evil spirits, (the abyss and the desert being probably expressive of different gradations of punishment and restraint), while in the latter, they speak of them as in circumstances which give them liberty of access to us. The rest, if it is insisted on, may be regarded as *costume*, and nothing more; although it would be impossible to prove that there is not in reality something more. But analogy with the modes of speaking in respect to God, and heaven, and hell, is enough to confirm and justify all that I have now said. We need not the conjectures of the rationalist here, to render the Scriptures both intelligible and reasonable, with regard to the doctrine of evil spirits.

The views which have been given may also serve to show, how little those representations, in sermons or elsewhere, are to be regarded, which in fact attribute *omnipresence* and *omniscience* to evil spirits, and make the devil in reality as much a rival of the true God, as the Parsees made Ahriman the rival of Oromasd. All this, and all that approaches to it, is not only *un*scriptural, but *anti*scriptural.

My object in giving so extended a view of this subject, is not merely to aid in the illustration of Rev. 1: 4. It has reference to the whole book of the Apocalypse, and to all the angelology, or the machinery (to speak technically) of angels, as there introduced, both the good and the bad. As their agency is everywhere interwoven with the very structure of the book, so it would be in vain for any one to suppose that he

can interpret the book, unless he forms an intimate acquaintance with Jewish angelology. There is frequent occasion in commenting on the Apocalypse, to recur to what is here said; and in this way I have aimed to be brief, in respect to many passages which would otherwise claim protracted exegesis, i. e. if they could not be referred to some such exhibitions as have been made in the present Excursus.

One reflection, at the close, naturally forces itself upon the mind. How can John be found fault with, as he has not unfrequently been, for introducing angels so often into his work, and employing them so much in the accomplishment of what he predicts will take place? Is not this entirely consonant with the manner of Daniel, and of Zechariah? These later prophets he has, I will not say imitated, but followed as a general model in the composition of his work; and this for the obvious reason, that they were more adapted to the taste of the later Hebrews and to that of his own times. Has he gone beyond the boundaries which Jewish feeling and usage, in respect to speaking of angels, permitted? I trust not. His imagination is indeed more powerful and vivid than that of Daniel or Zechariah; he sometimes ranges with more freedom in the world of pure imagination, (as in ch. ix.); but there is not a single distinctive and prominent trait of his angelology, which may not be found in other parts of Scripture, or at least in other contemporary works by Hebrews. What just ground can there be, then, for the accusation of excessive imagination and fictitious machinery? Some fiction, indeed, belongs to the very nature of elevated poetry. But has John more of it than is presented in Ps. xviii, or Is. xiv, or Ezek. i.? Such an objection, then, is one of the last which should be made, to an Epopee like the Apocalypse.

Is angelic interposition *unworthy* of the Godhead? What then are the laws of nature, and all the intermediate agencies by which the Maker of heaven and earth carries on his designs and accomplishes his purposes? On the other hand; I can conceive of no more magnificent and ennobling view of the Creator and Lord of all things, than that which regards him as delighting to multiply, even to an almost boundless extent, beings made in his own image, and therefore rational and moral and immortal like himself. How different from representing him as the Master of a magnificent puppet-show, all of which he manages by merely pulling the wires with his own hands! To make him the only real agent in the universe, and all else as mere *passive* recipients of his influence, is to take from him the glory that results from the creation of numberless beings in his own image—beings which reflect the brightness of their great Original. It is this intelligent and rational creation, in which John lives, moves, thinks, and speaks. The universe, as viewed by him, is filled with ministers swift to do Jehovah's will. They stand before

his throne; they preside over nations; they guide the sun in his shining course; the moon and stars send forth radiance at their bidding; the very elements are watched over by them; even infants are committed to the guidance of presence-angels; and "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about all that fear him." Such is the universe, which the God who is and was and is to come has created and governs; and amid the contemplation of productions and arrangements such as these, John wrote the glowing pages of the Apocalypse.

EXCURSUS II.

On the Symbolical Use of NUMBERS *in the Apocalypse.*

REV. I. 4. *Χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος· καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἑπτὰ πνευμάτων ἃ ἐστιν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου αὐτοῦ.*

The probability that the *seven presence-angels* who stand before the throne of God, ready and "swift to do his will," are here designated by the writer, I assume, in the present case, as already made out in the exegesis of this verse. But whether this meaning is rightly made out or not, the object of our present inquiry will be substantially the same. For if the phrase *seven spirits* is here nothing more than a periphrastic expression, designed merely to signify *Deus naturâ perfectissimâ*, as some maintain; or if, as others suppose, it means the *Holy Spirit*, whose perfect nature is designated by the expression *seven spirits;* the question still occurs: How comes the number *seven* to be employed in such a sense? Why, throughout the book before us, is it adopted as a leading characteristic of so many developments which the Apocalypse exhibits?

It will be conceded, I presume, by every considerate reader, that the writer of the Revelation meant, and expected, to be understood by his readers. It follows of course, then, that there was something in the *usus loquendi* of the day, and in the minds of his readers, which led him to believe that such a familiar use of the number *seven*, as he exhibits, was neither unintelligible to the mass of his readers, nor specially liable to be misunderstood.

It is agreed by all interpreters, so far as I know, that the number in question is not, for the most part, to be *literally* understood, throughout the Apocalypse. Yet few writers, indeed scarcely any, have undertа-

ken to explain the real ground of its figurative or tropical meaning. Many content themselves by merely telling us, that *seven* is a *round* number, or a *perfect* number, or a *sacred* number; and therefore it was employed as such by John, in the Apocalypse. Inquiry into the reason *why* this number came to be so regarded, some of these interpreters denounce as insignificant or superfluous; at all events they consider it as a mere hair-splitting business, which will end in nothing but disappointment, and therefore is not worth the trouble which it will cost.

Believing, for myself, that a number so extensively employed as this is by the sacred writers, and used so often in a tropical or figurative sense, has claims to our serious attention and inquiries, I shall venture, on the present occasion, to pursue these inquiries; and they may lead us, as I apprehend, into some paths, which perhaps we have hitherto not often frequented.

We may venture to ask, in the first place: How much light is cast on this subject, when we are told that the number in question is *sacred*, or *round*, or *perfect?* That it is *sacred*, can mean neither more nor less, than that it is employed for religious purposes, or in making communications respecting sacred things. But the question, *why* it is so employed, rather than most other numbers, remains wholly unanswered by such a declaration.

And when we are told that it is a *round* number, we feel at liberty to ask: In what sense is it any more round, than fourteen, or twenty, or thirty? Or, (if we should select numbers that are not so evidently *composite* in a peculiar way, in order to make the comparison), why is it any more round than six, or eight, or nine? And when we find three, four, ten, and twelve, often employed in the like way with seven, that is, as *round* numbers, (to adopt the usual mode of expression), we are naturally led to inquire, how or why such a significancy was attached to them, rather than to six, eight, nine, eleven, fourteen, twenty, or any other numbers.

Such an explanation, then, or rather such an attempt at explanation, can give an inquiring mind no solid satisfaction. There is something in this *sacred usus loquendi*, that appears to lie deeper than these superficial attempts at explanation have penetrated. Even the allegation that seven is a *perfect* number, goes but little further than those allegations already examined. For what is meant by a *perfect* number? All composite numbers are of course made up of units; and why *seven* units are more perfect than *six* or *eight*, is a question that few have even attempted to answer. In one sense every number is *perfect* in itself, i. e. it answers exactly and fully the end for which it is designed, so long as it is employed in its literal and obvious sense. But when *seven* is used in such a manner as to designate *perfection*, (for this fact is here

admitted), we may still be allowed to ask: Why should *seven* be so employed, rather than *six*, or *eight*, or any other number? And when this question is asked, we find ourselves to be just where we were when we commenced our journey, and that all our excursions have been made only in a circle that has brought us back to the point from which we started.

Can anything be done to give our steps a new direction, in order that we may make some advance toward a stationary point, which we may indulge a hope of reaching? I will not affirm it to be certain that there can; but since the recent publication of Dr. K. C. W. F. Bähr of Eichstett on the *Symbols of the Mosaical Institutions*, there seems to be a better prospect of making some actual advances in relation to this subject. To this writer I must pay the tribute of acknowledgment, that I have been much aided by his researches, in regard to many of the *facts* which will be stated in the sequel; with the general theory of the book I have no present concern.

It has often been suggested, in respect to the number *seven*, that it obviously derives its symbolical use from the institution of *weeks*, or the sabbatical division originally made when the work of creation was finished. Vitringa mentions this (Comm. in Apoc. p. 44) as not an improbable suggestion; but on the whole, he considers the symbolical, or (as he calls it) *mysterious* use of *seven*, as being too extensive and various to be accounted for merely in this way. To the same opinion I am rather inclined. Some reasons for it may be briefly stated.

There is nothing in the etymology of the word שֶׁבַע, *seven*, which leads to the idea of *fulness* or *completion* as its meaning. Indeed, so far as one can at present see, the word itself, like most *numerals* in other languages, is an *original* one. Accordingly Gesenius, in his lexicon, derives the verb שָׁבַע from the numeral שֶׁבַע, and thus classes it among the *denominative* verbs. It is a curious and interesting circumstance respecting this *verb*, that (as used in Niphal) it means only *to swear*, or *take an oath*, i. e. as we may naturally explain it, *to make an appeal to seven*, in solemn confirmation of anything, or, in other words (if I may be allowed to use them), *to become besevened*. What it is to appeal to *seven*, seems to be explained in Gen. 21: 28 seq. When the strife between the people of Abraham and Abimelek was composed, the former took seven lambs and set them by themselves; and when asked by Abimelek what he meant by so doing, Abraham answered, that he designed to present them to Abimelek "as a witness" for his rights in respect to a well about which their servants had been contending; and that well he named *Beersheba*, i. e. *the well of the oath* or *of seven*, "because there they sware both of them" (v. 31). When oaths were made, then, it would seem that this transaction was, at least at times, preceded by some exhibition of

the number *seven*, and that appealing to seven was the end of strife between contending parties.

But why *seven?* One might say, perhaps, that in such a case it symbolizes *completion*, i. e. the ending of strife. But I apprehend that the meaning lies deeper than this, and that *seven* in such a case was indicative of a religious and most solemn obligation; not because God was believed to consist of seven spirits, but for other reasons connected with religious obligation, which will be developed in the sequel.

To say that seven means *completion*, on the ground that it comes from שָׂבַע, *saturatus est*, as Parkhurst does in his lexicon, thus making no distinction between שָׂבַע and שָׂבַע; or to betake one's self to the Arabic شَبِعَ, which means the same as the Heb. שָׂבַע *to saturate*, as Simonis and Eichhorn do; what is this but to assume that the Hebrews made no practical distinction between *Sin* and *Shin*, and so to cut the knot instead of untying it?

But apart from etymologies, I have simply to remark, that the idea of *completion*, i. e. of having brought a thing to its close, (as was the case in respect to the seventh day at the time of the original creation), cannot be attached, without much modification, to a great part of the instances in which *seven* is symbolically employed. An idea kindred to this seems, indeed, to enter into most of the passages where seven is so used. A *competent* number; a *sufficient* one, (which sometimes means a large number, and sometimes designates the idea of several or of many); a number *complete* for the purpose designed, or to accomplish an object which presents itself before the mind of the writer; a number which may stand as it were in the place of a representative for all other numbers; in a word, a number, which, when the writer designs to employ a kind of definite form of expression, (and it is a matter of course to do so whenever *numbers* are employed by a speaker or writer), yet does not intend, on his part, to affix to this definite form any further meaning than that of a number sufficient or competent for any particular object or design in view—such a number, I would say, is *seven*. But when even this is said, it does not explain many instances of seven that occur in religious usage, as to times, seasons, sacred structures and utensils, offerings, prayers, and other things of the like nature. *Seven*, as pertaining to religious things, usages, or persons, oftentimes plainly has a symbolical sense, which would be very imperfectly unfolded, by saying that the number is *round*, or *perfect*, or *sacred*. Other numbers too are round and perfect; yea *sacred* also. There remains, then, some peculiarity of seven to be developed, at which we have not yet arrived.

If then we abandon the ground, that the original division of time into weeks, and the institution of the sabbath on the seventh day, will ac-

count for the symbolical meaning of the number seven, we must resort to some other considerations, in order to make the requisite illustration. Are they to be found? Can we in any way satisfy ourselves, *how* or *why* all the ancient world came to attach so much sacredness and significancy to the number seven?

A somewhat extensive investigation of this subject has brought me to the persuasion, that seven derives its principal symbolical significancy, from its being the sum or result of uniting the equally significant and sacred numbers, *three* and *four*. In order to explain my meaning, I must of course give some account of these numbers as employed in a symbolical way. I do this the more readily, since many examples occur in the Scriptures, and very many in the book before us, of such a use of *three* and *four*, particularly of *three*. When we have satisfied ourselves as to these, we shall then be prepared to examine the symbolical use of the number seven.

(1) Symbolical use of the number THREE.

Over all the Eastern World are to be found the most indubitable traces of an original *monotheism*. The conception of this divine unity, however, has received peculiar modifications among heathen nations. I will state some of them, as briefly as the nature of the case will admit.

A self-existent, uncreated, eternal Being, the original Source of all creatures, and all worlds, and of all the gods who made and govern them, lies at the basis of all the ancient oriental theosophy. In the Hindoo system, this uncreated and eternal Being is named *Para-Brahma*, i. e. the *original Great* or *mighty One;* (Brahma means the *great* or *mighty one*, like the Hebrew אַבִּיר, the *mighty One* of Israel). Among the ancient Persians and Medes, his name was Zervane Akerene, i. e. *Uncreated Time* or the Infinite One, as appears often in the Zend Avesta; the Egyptians called him Athou or Athyr, i. e *ancient darkness* or the *concealed ground* of all things; the Chinese called him Tao, i. e. *the Three-one*. According to these systems, this original Source of all things, considered as undeveloped, and as existing in and by himself, had as yet no proper *personality*. He was the τὸ ἕν of the Greek philosophers, or the ἡ μονάς, i. e. *the abstract principle of Unity*, but not one in the concrete sense, and as distinguished from two or more taken in a concrete sense. In order, however, that a development of this original Source of all things might be made, a πόθος (*desire*) was ascribed to him, the tendency of which was toward development. By the refinement or subtilty of the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophers, the original Being was represented by ἡ μονάς, i. e. abstract quality of one or unity; and sometimes by ἀριθμός in its abstract sense, and

regarded as the parent or source of all numbers. The distinguished Synesius of Cyrene (fl. 410), a heathen philosopher and poet of great reputation, says of God: *Μονὰς εἶ μονάδων, Ἀριθμὸς ἀριθμῶν,* (Hymn. 3). Athenagoras of Athens (fl. c. 177), one of the Christian fathers, and of the new Platonic School, in his Apology (p. 49 edit. Bech.), says of God: *Μονάς ἐστιν ὁ θεός*; and Macrobius (Somn. Scip. 1. 6) says: Unitas dicitur; ipse non numerus, sed fons et origo numerorum. Haec monas, initium finisque omnium . . . ad summum refertur Deum.

I have dwelt on this statement with some particularity, because here seems to be the germ of all symbolical representation by numbers. Consider for a moment the nature of the case before us. The original Source of all being, considered as yet undeveloped, and therefore as yet possessing no distinct personality, is represented or symbolized by unity, the parent of all numbers, the proper and exclusive source (if I may so speak) of all the numerical creation. And this representation is made by *ἡ μονάς*, the mere *quality of unity*, or (to use Platonic language) the *idea* of unity, and not by *εἷς*, *one* in the concrete, as distinguished from two or more regarded in the same light.—If now an intelligible representation of the Godhead must be made to us through the medium of language, (which I need not stop to prove); and if language possesses no powers of *literally* describing the Godhead, that are adequate to such a purpose, (and this is equally plain); then what else can be done, but to employ language in a tropical, metaphorical, or symbolical way, in order to designate, in some more impressive manner, that which no words literally employed can express? And as *ἡ μονάς*, used in the Greek sense, is the source and parent of all numbers, and yet not itself *one* in a concrete sense, (I might say, if I may be indulged in an unusual latitude of expression, is the *principle* of one or unity, and not the *person* of one); and moreover, as the original Source of all things, while undeveloped, was regarded as not yet having assumed personality or separate and distinctive personal existence; what better or more significant emblem of the original Godhead could the orientals choose, than the *Μονάς* already named? The propriety, I might say the vivid force, of such a symbol, can hardly be overlooked by any mind which is capable of duly appreciating the necessities to which we are often driven, for want of power to express by language what the mind has already conceived in itself.

Thus far we seem to be travelling in a plain road. Our next stage is somewhat more arduous and difficult. Still, the same principles kept in view, which have already been developed, will enable us to make the journey without any great perplexity.

God, the original Source of all things, has developed himself. The creation, rational and irrational, exists. In the developments which the

Godhead has made, his personality, so to speak, has become perceptible to the rational beings whom he has created. And it is a fact, astonishing at first view, but not more astonishing than true, that nearly all the leading nations of antiquity, with whose theosophy we are acquainted, have represented his development as *threefold* or *tripartite*. In other words; the doctrine of a *Trinity*, in some form or other, seems to lie at the basis of all the ancient and celebrated systems of religion. God developed or disclosed, is represented as God in a threefold relation to his creatures.

So it is in the Hindoo system of theology. From Para-Brahma, the original Source, proceed, when he developes himself, Brahma the *Creator*, Vishnu the *Preserver*, Shiva the *Destroyer* and *Renewer*. These are the three forms, or persons, in which Para-Brahma appears; and it is in these only that worship is paid to the original divine Being, who is considered as developing himself equally in all.—Their essence is one. *One supreme God in three persons*, imperfectly but substantially represented, seems to be the doctrine of the Hindoos. See Bähr, p. 145.

The Budhists, who constitute a numerous sect in eastern India and beyond, have also their trinity in like manner. Thus Buddhas, Dharmas, and Sangghas, the revealer, the revealed, and the hosts who obey the revelation, constitute the leading objects of worship by the Budhists.

Among the Chinese, the celebrated Tao-Tsee says, that "Tao [the original Godhead] is by his nature one; but the first has produced a second; the second a third; and these three have created all things. . . . In vain (it goes on to say) may your senses inquire concerning all three; your reason only can affirm anything respecting them; and this will tell you that these are only *one*." (Bähr, p. 147.) The so called *Chaldee Oracles*, which, with some foreign admixtures, seem to comprise many genuine remains of Chaldaism, contain a remarkable passage: "Unity has produced a second which dwells with it, and shines in intellectual light; from this proceeds a third, which shines through the whole world." (Orac. Chald. 5. 1.) The Phenician theology assigns to the universe a *triplex principium*, Jupiter [the heavens], the Earth, and Love which unites the two. So Pherecydes states the matter; but Sanchoniathon, who deserves more credit, states, that 'out of Chaos the First Born emerged, and with him the trinity, Ulomus, Olusoros, and Eliun, or light, fire, and flame.' Bähr, p. 148.

The Rabbinical and Cabbalistic Trinity is too well known to need anything more than a bare reference to it. Out of the *Endless Being* (אֵין סוֹף, like the Zervane Akerene) proceed, when he developes himself, the three highest Sephiroth, viz. כֶּתֶר *crown*, חָכְמָה *wisdom*, and

בִּינָה *intelligence.* The seven inferior Sephiroth serve to mark other attributes or developments of the Godhead.

Parsism, or the theosophy of Zoroaster, appears at first sight to be *Dualism.* Oromasd and Ahriman, the good and the evil divinities, seem to occupy the fore-ground, and almost to close up our view of everything divine in the back-ground. Yet when the whole system is strictly scanned, it would seem, that out of Zervane Akerene, or *the Uncreated Time*, proceeded Oromasd, Ahriman (originally good), and Mithra who stands between the two, (Bähr. p. 148). Or, omitting Mithra as inferior, we have a trinity of the others.

The Egyptian theosophy represents, as proceeding from Athor or original night, Kneph (Amun), Pthas, and Osiris; which are symbolized in the natural world by light, fire, and the sun; and in the ideal world, by omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness.

The Orphic theosophy, which lies at the basis of all the Grecian theogony, and which was confessedly derived from the East, makes a trinity of gods, differently named by different persons and places, to stand at the head. And so with the gods of Samothrace, viz. Axieros, Axiokersa, and Axiokersos, who spring from the τὸ Πᾶν, *the great All.* The ancient European northern hordes, who came from Asiatic regions, had a similar theosophy. The old Prussians called their trinity, Perkunos, Pikollos, and Potrimpos; the ancient Swedes worshipped Odin, Thor, and Friggo. The old Pomeranians called their god Triglav, i. e. *three headed;* the Scandinavians worshipped Othin, Vile, and Ve; the old Irish, Kriosan, Biosena, and Siva. And the like phenomena have been found among the Indians of South America, the West Indies, and other places. (Bähr p. 150.)

These are striking facts. What is there in the number *three*, which gave occasion to employ it so often and to such a wide extent, among the most ancient nations, in order to designate the developments of the Godhead?

Bähr supposes that three is thus selected, because three is the first number which constitutes a full *concrete* unity. The number *one* constitutes *simple* unity; *two* has been widely and usually regarded as the index of *division, separation, severalty, antithesis.* But the number *three*, having a beginning, middle, and end, and being indivisible, (fractions are left out of the question in such reckonings), it represents a perfect *composite* unity. Bähr produces passages from ancient Greek authors to show, that they reasoned in this manner respecting the number three; but I apprehend there is something too speculative and artificial in this view, to render it probable that it was generally regarded as furnishing a reason for adopting *three* as a symbol of the Godhead.

May we not come to a more satisfactory view of the subject in another way? In forming an idea of the Godhead, the human mind must transfer the views it has of things within the circle of its knowledge and perception, to the Divinity himself, and then abstract from them whatever there is of the finite and imperfect in them. So the Scriptures themselves everywhere employ anthropopathic expressions, and describe the Godhead by applying to it names of attributes that designate the parts, passions, and conceptions of men. Like to this is the use of ideas borrowed from human views of some leading and striking features in the universe; which latter was regarded by the ancient world as impressed, in some important respects, with images or rather symbols of its Creator. Thus the universe as a whole has three parts, the upper, the middle, and the under worlds; I speak, of course, according to the views of ancient times, in which the Hebrews also shared. A like division is heaven, earth, and sea. So sun, moon, and stars. Time, a striking image in some respects of the Infinite One, is divided into present, past, and future. So, morning, noon, and evening. Time and space, in all our limited conceptions of them, have beginning, middle, and end. "The universe and all things," says Aristotle in accordance with the Pythagoreans, "are limited by the number three." So of persons, first, second, and third. (Bähr p. 142.) How easy, now, and natural even, (we may add), to make *three* the symbol of the all-perfect and infinite One, *who is, and was, and is to come!*

In accordance with this we find *three* most extensively employed, in the heathen world, as significant of whatever is divine, creative, or productive. As in numbers it forms the first complete *composite* unity, which is indivisible, so in forms and figures that are purely mathematical and ideal, it bears a most conspicuous part. The triangle is the basis of almost all geometrical forms, and is itself unresolvable into any other. Accordingly the Hindoos make it the symbol of the gods who are most worshipped by them. A triangle with its point upwards, is the symbol of Shiva; with the point downwards, of Vishnu. The image of Shiva has three eyes, one being in the middle of the forehead; and he bears a triangle as his *insigne*. The world, which they consider in some respects as the image of God, the Hindoos divide into upper, middle, and lower; man, whom they regard as a kind of μικρόθεος, is divided into body, soul, and spirit; just as among the Hebrews, 1 Thess. 5: 23. Himalaya, the mount of the gods, has three summits; the holy fire is threefold; and there are three modes of knowledge.

Of like signification is the triangle among the Chinese, and the principal province of the heavenly world, Petcheli, they represent as triangular. A tripod they call *spirit*, from its symbolical signification.

The book Seeki says: "Formerly the emperor offered solemnly every three years to the Spirit of threeness and oneness." (Bähr, p. 47.)

The Babylonish ritual required prayer and kneeling three times, each day, before the supreme divinity. The temple of Belus contained three collossal images, dedicated to the divinity. Parsism assigned triangle to Mithras, their mediator god, as his *insigne*.

Among the Greeks and Romans this number is conspicuous, in respect to things pertaining to sacred rites that have relation to the Godhead. "These three threads," says Virgil, "diversified by three different colours, I bind around; three times I carry the effigy around these altars; the god delights in this uneven number:" Ecl. 8: 73. On this Servius the ancient commentator remarks: "The triplex perfect number that [the Romans] assigned to the supreme God, from whom is the beginning, middle, and end." He adds: "The power of all the gods is exhibited by a threefold sign; Jove has *fulmen trifidum*, Neptune a trident, Pluto a *canis triceps;* Apollo is also *Sol* et *Liber*. All things are contained in this triplex division, the destinies, the furies, etc." (Serv. in loc.)

Plutarch (de Isid. c. 46) says: *ἡ δὲ κρείττων καὶ θειότερα φύσις ἐκ τριῶν ἔστι*. Plato (de Leg. IV. 716) says: "God, according to the ancient saying, contains the beginning, the end, and the middle, of all things."

The Mosaic religion differs, in one important respect, widely from all the heathen systems brought to view. An *impersonal* God it knows not. An original, eternal, impersonal cause of all things, is never even hinted at. Nor is the doctrine of the Trinity, as such, *explicitly* revealed in the O. Testament. Monotheism is most strenuously inculcated, and everything which would lead directly to tritheism, or polytheism, (into which all the heathen systems early degenerated), is most scrupulously, and (as it would seem) purposely avoided, in order to guard against the lapse of the Hebrews into the religion of the heathen. But still, there is after all an occult reference to a plurality in the Godhead. De Wette himself (Bib. Dogmatik, § 112) acknowledges, that there is a threefold idea of the Godhead in the O. Testament, as Supreme Governor, as God revealed, and as the Spirit who operates in all things. For a plurality of nature, one has often appealed to the plural form of the noun אֱלֹהִים, and to such expressions as *Let* US *make man*, *Let* US *go down*, *Become like one of* US; but this appeal is of a nature too indefinite and uncertain to support the allegation. Much more to the purpose is the threefold blessing, which Moses and Aaron were commanded to pronounce over the congregation of Israel: "Jehovah bless thee, and keep thee; Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee; Jehovah lift his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!"

Num. 6: 24—26. This, in v. 27, is called, 'putting the name of Jehovah upon the children of Israel.' How well this corresponds with 2 Cor. 13: 14, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you," needs scarcely to be mentioned. Nor can we help calling to mind also the formula of baptism into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Obvious too is the meaning of קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ in Is. 6: 3, and the *trisagion* in Rev. 4: 8, accompanied with the most significant designation of the Eternal, *ὁ ὤν, ὁ ἦν, καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος*.

With this corresponds well the three times a day, that Daniel was accustomed to pray (6: 10); and the morning, noon, and night, at which the Psalmist lifted up his voice, Ps. 55: 17. Even the Rabbins have set this in connection with the divine nature. "Morning prayers," says Rabbi Samuel Ben David, "signify that God existed before the world was; prayer at noon, that he now exists; prayer at evening, that he will exist." (In Schoettgen. Hor. Heb. p. 1084.) But besides these, three times in a year must all Israel go up to worship God at Jerusalem, Ex. 23: 14, 17. 34: 23. Deut. 16: 16. The third day is designated as a special and peculiar one, in respect to various solemnities or religious usages, Ex. 19: 11—16. Num. 19: 12, 19; and this limitation of time in a great variety of cases, is found in the Scriptures, e. g. 1 Sam. 20: 19. Gen. 42: 17. Ex. 10: 22. Josh. 2: 16, 22. Judg. 14: 14. 2 Kings 2: 17. Jonah 3: 3. Matt. 27: 40. These are only a few of the cases. The proverbial use of three is well known; e. g. Ecc. 4: 12. Sirach 25: 1, 2. A more generic use may be found in 2 Sam. 24: 12. Ezek. 21: 14. Judg. 16: 15. 1 Kings 17: 21. Acts 10: 16, and in a multitude of like cases.

The extensive use of three by the Rabbins and Cabbalists, is also well known. The three upper Sephiroth in the Godhead they refer to the *trisagion* in Is. 6: 3. The world, considered as the symbol or image of God, they divide into three, *Beriah*, *Jezirah*, and *Asiah;* and man, as a *μικρόθεος* they divide into נֶפֶשׁ, רוּחַ, and נְשָׁמָה.

Enough, I trust, has now been said to show, why *three* is deemed to be a *sacred* number; in other words, why it is employed in designating symbolically the Godhead itself, or whatever stands in immediate connection with it, in the way of worship, ceremonies, rites, holy seasons, etc. That this number should thus be deemed highly significant, and therefore be often transferred to other things where intensity or completeness was to be designated, ceases to be strange or unaccountable, with such facts as these before us.

It would appear now, from the view which has thus been taken, that the doctrine of a *Trinity* in the Godhead lies much deeper than the New Platonic philosophy, to which so many have been accustomed to refer it. An original impression of the character in question plainly

overspread all the ancient oriental world; and whence could this come, but from earlier tradition, which flowed from a revealed and patriarchal religion? That many philosophistic and superstitious conceits have been mixed with it, in process of time, proves nothing against the general fact as stated. And this being admitted, we cease to think it strange, that such distinction and significancy have been given in the Scriptures, to the number *three*. The oriental idiom in general was in accordance, in this respect, with the Jewish idiom; and the Jewish idiom was in accordance with facts, which, although not fully disclosed by Moses, (for no man, as John says in his Gospel, at any time in ancient days knew God), yet were fully revealed by "the only Begotten, who dwelleth in the bosom of the Father," and who therefore knows all the mysteries of the Godhead.

To all which has now been said of the use of the number *three* should be added, of course, the *rhetorical* employment of it in dividing and subdividing some distinguished portions of the Scriptures. The book of Job, for example, and the Apocalypse exhibit trichotomy in all their parts, down to even the minutest subdivisions. In such cases it has an intense rhetorical significancy, which probably arose at first from the other significancy already pointed out. But it would be only repetition to dwell on this part of the subject here. The reader will find it fully exhibited in the introduction to the Commentary, Vol. I. p. 135 seq. He will permit me to solicit him to examine what is there exhibited, before he makes up his mind as to the significancy of the number *three*. He cannot well doubt, after such an examination, that we may unhesitatingly assume the special significancy of this number in many parts of the sacred writings.

(2) Symbolical use of the number FOUR.

We have seen, that *three* came to be symbolical of the divine nature, because some leading objects of mental conception in the human mind, which approximate nearest to the designation of that which is *infinite*, or that which is generic and productive, are viewed in a threefold light, or present a ternary form. For example, time present, past, and future; heaven, earth, and Hades; in mathematical science the triangle, itself unresolvable into other forms, and yet the parent of most forms; and in anthropology, body, soul, and spirit. If images of the Godhead can in any safe and significant measure be borrowed from the material or intellectual world, the objects designated most obviously afford them.

We come now to the relation which number may bear, as a symbolical designation, to the *world* or *universe* as a production of creative power, i. e. of the Godhead. Here, of course, we might expect to find a number employed which is different from three; and such is in fact the case.

Bähr states the matter thus: '*Four*, considered in its arithmetical relation to *three*, obviously proceeds from three, and necessarily includes three in itself. If three, then, designates the true, the highest, and the most perfect Being, *four* must designate that which proceeds from him, or is dependent on him. If three designates God, four must consequently designate the world, or the universe.' (p. 155.)

I do not see the conclusiveness of this reasoning; for I do not see how three produces four, rather than two and two, or one four times repeated. There is somewhat of the Pythagorean philosophy in this speculation, which is too tenuous to commend itself to a mind that seeks only the intelligible and the obviously probable.

A better reason, as it seems to me, can easily be given, for the alleged signification of *four*. The created universe, according to general opinion among the ancients, resolves itself into four elements, fire, air, earth, and water. Four are the regions of the earth, viz. east, west, north, and south. In four different ways is the extension of all bodies conceived of; for they have length, breadth, height, and depth. Into four parts is circling time divided, morning, noon, evening, and midnight. Four are the seasons, winter, spring, summer, and autumn. Four are the marked variations of the lunar phases. Four are the ages of man, infancy, youth, manhood, and old age.

Such are the obvious and prominent arrangements of created things. If we go from these to the world of abstract science, i. e. the intellectual world, there we find the square a highly important ground-form in geometrical relations. Order, rule, regularity, may therefore be obviously designated by four, when symbolically employed. The *cube*, which consists of fours throughout, is evidently a very significant image.

In accordance with these simple principles we find a multitude of facts, in the eastern world. Thus the Oupnekhat, a book of high authority among the Hindoos, says: "There are four ways of production, from the egg, from the womb, by creation, and from the seed as of plants." (Bähr, p. 157.) The triplex images of the gods, i. e. a junction of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, have four arms, designating creative power and energy. Brahma is formed with four arms, and sometimes four heads; and so most of the Hindoo gods are represented with four arms. The Ramayana, a sacred poem, gives to the world four bearers; and so assigns to it four quarters or parts. The mystical square of the Hindoos, which is used as an amulet, is designed to represent the world. It contains three rows of squares, (a union of three and four), joined together and marked with unit numbers, so that, if read in any direction, the sum of them is fifteen. The form is thus:

6	7	2
1	5	9
8	3	4

The number five thus occupies the middle station, and designates the soul of the world; the other numbers designate the world; the *even* ones the earthly elements, the *uneven* ones the heavenly elements. Man, as an image of the world, a real *μικρόκοσμος*, is drawn by the Hindoos upon this magic square, with his hands and feet extended to the four corners. The *lotus-flower*, which has four leaves, is the most favourite of all the symbols, taken from the productions of nature, in Hindoo theosophy. The word *Aoum*, the *λόγος προφόρικος*, or creative word of the Hindoos, has four letters which are a symbol of the world which this word created. The world-period is by them divided into four parts, viz. 4000, 3000, etc. During these Brahma reveals himself four times. Four great classes or castes of men are made by the Hindoos, each of which proceeds from different parts of Brahma. The Hindoo armies were divided into four parts; and the like division was made in all subordinate distinctions of their troops. Buddha, or reason personified, in which the Godhead reveals itself, holds a *square* in its hands, and wears one on its breast; so that four is the symbol of *revelation*, as well as of creation. The fourth day of the week is consecrated to Mercury, the guardian of the planets. The holy book or revelation, the Veda, is divided into four parts; and these are called the four words of the four mouths. In pictures, the Olla, or palm-leaf prepared for writing, appears adorned with four stars. The Brahmin, in sacred meditation, sits upon a square form.

Among the Egyptians, the symbolic use of four seems to be not less striking. After the three supreme divinities, follow four pairs, personifications of the powers by which the world exists and is regulated, viz., fire and water, heaven and earth, sun and moon, day and night. The *sistrum*, an instrument of sacred music, had four bars or chords, which were struck in order to regulate time; symbols, of course, of order and regulation. The Greeks tell us that these sounds also symbolized the four elements; like the four tones in the Hindoo word Aoum. Four castes of men were designated in ancient Egypt. Hermes, the Logos of the Egyptians, the inventor of all the sciences and of language and writing, was called *τετράγωνος* by the Greeks, in imitation of the Egyp-

tian designation of him. His statue was a simple cubiform stone or pillar. The sacred books of Hermes were divided into four parts; like the Vedas of the Hindoos.

The Pythagorean school paid such a regard to the number four, that they even invented a new name for it, and called it ἡ τετρακτύς; and it was deemed to be significant of the world, κόσμος, i. e. order, beauty, arrangement. The statues of the gods of Greece, in most ancient times, were *square*, i. e. cubiform pillars. At Pharae in Achaia was a cubiform image of Hermes, and around it thirty square stones, each inscribed with the name of a god. At Megalopolis in Arcadia were statues of five of the Greek deities, which were square; at Athens was a similar statue of Venus.

The ancient Arabians worshipped cubiform statues; and amulets of this form were common. Cybele, the Phrygian mother of the gods, was represented in this way; and the Arabian black stone, Hagiar Al Assoud, was of the same form. The Pythagoreans not only designated Hermes (Logos) by a square, but represented human souls in the same way; and their highest oath was made by four.

The Chinese made four ways of origination, like those of the Hindoos. With them a square is the figure of the universe, or of heaven and earth in particular. The universe they divide into four parts, assign a guardian genius to each, who is also lord of one of the four elements. The celestial empire is symbolized by two squares, a kind of *pluralis excellentiae*. Offerings are made to the four seasons, on four mountains, lying in four different quarters. Offerings are made to the heavens on a round hill, but to the quadriform earth, in a square place.

Among the Sabaeans and Chaldeans, a square was the symbol of the sun, as the light of lights in which Godhead is revealed. Their astrology made four cardinal points, and built upon their significancy in this science. The Persians, Ethiopians, and others, represented the chariot of the sun as having four horses; which, however, may have been simply indicative of speed. The Zend Avesta makes four quarters of the world, and four protecting Genii. Four stars of heaven are the homes of Ormusd; men were divided into four classes among the Persians; the Magi wore four knots in their sacred tiara. Down to the present hour, the Parsees consider the *cube* as the perfect image of the world.

The Paradise of the Hindoos is placed on the lofty mountain Meru; it is arched by four mountains, with four gigantic trees on their tops; and there are four rivulets of silver water at the foot. Brahma's palace on Meru has four doors, out of which stream four rivers, that flow toward the four quarters of the world; all of which reminds one of the four rivers assigned to paradise in the book of Genesis.

The paradise of the Thibetans is, in like manner, on the mountain-peak, Rivou; it is square, and consists of four elements; at the foot of the mountain are four stones with the forms of four animal heads, and also four rivers issue from the mountain. The Chinese paradise is on mount Kouantun (heavenly mountain), is watered by a golden river, which divides itself into four branches that refresh and animate all things. The Persian paradise is mount Albordj, the place of Ormusd's throne, formed in four periods. Four rivers water this paradise, and these are the waters of salvation.

From this view of the symbolical use of *four* among heathen nations, let us turn our inquiries to the *Hebrew* usage. And here we find many traces of the like usage. To the earth and the heavens are assigned four quarters or points; Ezek. 7: 2. Zech. 1: 18—21. Rev. 7: 1. 20: 8. The heavens are divided into four great constellations; Job 9: 9. 38: 31, 32. And that in these cases we are to give a symbolical sense to the word *four* rather than a literal one, would seem to be clear from the fact, that the Hebrews do not appear to have viewed the earth as an actual square; "He [Jehovah] sitteth upon the *circle* of the earth," says Isaiah in chap. 40: 22. In Deut. 22: 12, the Jews are required to make fringes upon the *four* quarters of their mantles; and with such a garment, it would seem, from the custom of their synagogues, they clothed themselves when they made supplication. In Ezekiel's vision of the throne of God (chap. i.), there are four living creatures who support the throne of God; each one has four faces, four wings, and four hands; the throne is a square, it has four wheels; the living creatures move on four sides. In Rev. iv. we find the same imagery substantially repeated; four living creatures, with four different faces, support the throne of divine Majesty, as in the vision of Ezekiel. The first four seals, which are broken by the Lamb of God (Rev. vi.), denote preparatory action; and the first four trumpets that follow the breaking of the seventh seal, are of the like character, and affect the earth, the sea, the streams of water, and the heavenly bodies; Rev. viii.

In the book of Enoch, the *four ends of heaven* are often mentioned; and the treasures of the four winds are there laid up. (See Hoffmann on Book of Enoch, chap. 18: 1. 55: 4). The Rabbins have a tradition, that the square stone, which formed the lid of the ark in the second temple, was formed as the first created material thing, and that all the world was, as it were, supported by and modeled after this foundation. The Cabbalists make four worlds to emanate from the original Source of all things, viz. Aziluth, Beriah, Jezirah, and Asiah. Even the word יְהוָה they call *the name of four*, or *the name of four letters*, *τετραγράμματον*; which, because it is peculiarly significant and holy, they also name שֵׁם הַמְּפוֹרָשׁ, *the separate Name*, i. e. one given to no other being, and one

to be pronounced by none but the high priest when he went into the inner sanctuary. One cannot refrain from calling to mind here the like mysterious use of the Hindoo *Aoum*, which could be named only by the consecrated. So among the Chaldeans and Sabaeans, the name *Jao* was pronounced only in the inner sanctuary.

Is it possible, now, to consider all this accord in the use of *four*, as a thing merely *accidental?* This will not be said, I apprehend, by any considerate man, well versed in the knowledge of ancient symbols. And if it is not accidental but symbolical, and as such is highly significant, then why should we reject so important an aid in the interpretation of some parts of the Bible, specially of the theophanies in Ezekiel and in John's Apocalypse?

We are now prepared to resume our inquiry, respecting the meaning of the number *seven*, so often employed in the Revelation, and in other parts of the Scriptures.

(3) Symbolical use of the number SEVEN.

If we have come to a satisfactory conclusion respecting the *symbolical* use of the numbers three and four, we may, without much difficulty, arrive at a conclusion perhaps equally satisfactory, respecting the number seven.

If *three* is the symbol of the Godhead in its developments, and in its relations to the creation; and *four* is the symbol of the creation rational and irrational, but specially of the former; then a union of these two significant numbers might naturally enough be symbolic of a union between God and his creatures, i. e. it would naturally enough designate the connection between God and the world. From this relation or connection springs all that is named *religion*, or *worship;* and with this worship stands connected all that belongs to the solid and lasting happiness of intelligent beings. It is not strange, then, that *seven*, which, when *generically* considered, is symbolic of union between the Creator and his creatures, should designate many leading particulars which arrange themselves under such a *genus*. Hence, when we find it employed as a symbol more frequently than any other number in prescriptions respecting religious worship, rites, and ordinances; most frequent of all in regard to revelations or communications which God has made to man; or in regard to the results of these, i. e. the peace and happiness of man; there seems to be nothing unnatural or unaccountable in such a use. And inasmuch as the union of God and man involves of course the idea of man's most perfect state, it is natural enough that seven should easily go over to the designation of that which is perfect, or be considered as the perfect number by way of eminence.

There are some natural grounds, moreover, for such views respecting

this number. There are *sevens* in the world of nature, which, to the mind of the ancients, were striking and significant. For example, the well known and familiar appellation of the world in Greek, is *κόσμος*; which means, in its primitive sense, *ornament, arrangement, order* according to fixed laws, a *harmony* in all the parts of anything, and the like. The Pythagoreans found in the seven musical tones a striking emblem of this harmony; especially as viewed in connection with the seven planets, the only ones known to them. All these, as is well known, move in perfect order and preserve an entire harmony. Hence they imagined a resemblance between them and the seven musical tones, which, taken together, make up the circle of harmony in music. Hence *Pan*, the personification of the Universe, was represented as having a flute of seven reeds, emitting seven different notes when breathed upon by its owner; and his music-moving breath was compared to the igneous aether, which the ancients regarded as diffused through the universe, and occasioning all the revolutions of the planets in what might be named a musical order. From this came, in an obvious way, the idea of the *music of the spheres*. The God who created the universe, created it, as the *anthropomorphitic* heathen supposed, so as to regale himself with the music which it was continually sending forth, while the evolutions of the planets were performed. The latter, of course, were considered as performing in their movements a *χορός* or *circling dance*, which usually accompanied music.

In Egypt, the priests offered praise to Hermes, the author of order, rule, and law, by playing on a lute of seven tones; which tones were supposed to resemble the harmony of the spheres. In the same country, *seven* inferior divinities were supposed to follow on after the first three, representing the seven original powers. Pan, who connected and united all these, was reckoned an eighth. In like manner the Cabbalists suppose that seven inferior Sephiroth follow on, in order, after the three leading or supreme Sephiroth. Among the Greeks, Apollos' lyre, with seven strings, seems to be a symbol of the like nature, i. e. it betokens the *harmony* of the universe. Apollo himself, therefore, was named *Ἑβδομαγένης*, and the seventh day (*Sunday*) was consecrated to him. On account of these coincidences of the several planets and the seven tones of music, the Pythagoreans named seven *the tone*, because within its limits all the gradations of tone were included.

In Hindostan, where man was considered in the light of a *μικρόκοσμος*, as well as a *μικρόθεος*, he was regarded as an image of the great seven stringed lyre; and the Hindoos reckoned his members in such a way as to make seven of them.

The seven days of the week, (a division which runs nearly the world over), shows how extensively a seven-fold division of time existed in the

ancient world. Yet the Hebrew Sabbath had probably a different rise, and obviously took its designation from the time when God *ceased* [שָׁבַת] to create.

The idea of harmony, union, and consequently of peace and of a perfect state, obviously connects itself with the ancient views of paradise. The Hindoos place around their paradise on mount Meru, seven peninsulas, and around these seven seas. Abbordj, the paradise-mountain of the Perians, has seven Keshwars, or girdles of the earth, corresponding to the seven climates of the Arabians. Around the paradisiacal mountain ridge Himavata, of the Thibetans, stand seven mountains, surrounded by seven seas. Herodotus represents Egypt, in his day, as making seven different castes or divisions of men. China, before the time of the emperor Shi-Hoang, was divided into seven provinces. The Persian empire was divided into seven satrapies; Ormusd had seven archangels around him in the court of heaven, called Amshaspands; and Ahriman created seven evil archangels to correspond and to cope with these.

It would be easy to carry this representation much further; as Aulus Gellius has shown us in his *Noctes Atticae*, (Lib. III. 10), by an extract from Varro; and Philo, also, in his treatise De Opif. Mundi, p. 20—29. Leg. Allegor. p. 42 seq. One has only to read the book of Enoch, a production contemporary, or nearly so, with the Apocalypse, in order to see what a favorite number seven was at that time in respect to objects and matters of a spiritual nature. Thus in ch. viii. seven leading evil angels are presented to us. Seven stars, i. e. seven angels who direct or guide them, are destined to punishment for irregularity in their course, 18: 14. Seven mountains in the entrances of the north are replete with pure nard, odoriferous trees, cinnamon, and papyrus, 31: 1; seven high mountains are the store-houses of frost, 76: 5; seven great rivers on earth are the source of all other rivers, 76: 6, 7; seven great islands are in the inland seas, and seven in the great ocean, 76: 8; and seven mountains of seven splendid precious stones form the ground-plat of paradise, 24: 1 seq. At all this we cease to wonder, when we consider how extensively the number seven was employed by the Hebrews, even from the earliest period of their history.

The bible is so full of this number, that all I can aim at doing will be only to make a selection of examples.

It is proper to mark, in the way of introduction to this scriptural view of *seven*, that no reference, of which I am aware, can be found in the Scriptures to the *seven planets*, which unquestionably gave occasion, among the heathen nations, to an extensive use of the number seven. It is rather a matter of surprise, that the Hebrews, who came from the midst of an *astronomical* nation, the Chaldees, and so afterwards from

the midst of the Egyptians, should not have exhibited either Chaldee or Egyptian views in regard to the *heptenary* number of the planets. We must suppose, then, that the use of seven among them, in the sense before stated, originated in a different way from its similar use among the heathen.

In considering seven as a sign of union or of a covenant state, we will begin with the sign of the covenant made with Abraham. After a lapse of seven days, circumcision, one of the tokens of the covenant, was to be performed, Gen. 17: 12. Another token was the Sabbath, recurring every seventh day, Ex. 31: 12—17. The sabbath-breaker was to be punished with death as a breaker of the covenant, Ex. 35: 2. Other holy-seasons besides the sabbath, were regulated by sevens. Seven days was the passover-feast to be kept, Num. 28: 24, 25. Ex. 34: 18. On the seventh month was to be held a holy convocation of the people, at the feast of trumpets, Num. 29: 1. The feast of Pentecost commenced after the completion of seven weeks from the time of the wave-offering of the first fruits, Lev. 23: 15. Deut. 16: 9. After seven times seven years, the time of jubilee was appointed, Lev. 25: 8. The blood of the propitiatory-offering for sin against the covenant of God, was to be sprinkled seven times before the Lord, Lev. 4: 6, 17. 16: 14, 15. Seven lambs, without blemish, were to be offered at the feast of Pentecost, Lev. 23: 18. Seven days was uncleanness to continue, which resulted from touching a dead body, and then purification could be completed, Num. 19: 11, 12. Mourning and fasting for the dead continued seven days, 1 Sam. 31: 13. 1 Chron. 10: 12. Gen. 50: 10. The leprous man when cured and about to be cleansed, was sprinkled seven times with blood, and seven times with oil, and staid out of his tent for seven days, Lev. 14: 7, 8, 16, 27. His house was also to be sprinkled seven times with blood and water, Lev. 14: 51. Naaman the Syrian leper, was directed to plunge seven times into the river Jordan, that he might be cleansed, 2 K. 5: 10. The mother, after the birth of a man-child, was reckoned unclean seven days; after the birth of a female, twice seven days, Lev. 12: 2, 5. Ceremonial uncleanness from several special causes in respect to men, lasted seven days, Lev. 15: 13, 24. In all these and the like cases, we are to refer the number seven to the *acceptable* day of purification, to the acceptable time for a reunion to God, and not to the matter of uncleanness.

Even the altar itself was, when built, to be purified by a process of seven days' offerings, Ex. 29: 37. Aaron and his sons, when consecrated to their office, were not to go out of the tabernacle in seven days, Lev. 8: 33.

Among foreign nations, also, do we find the religious use of seven. The Hindoos have seven purgatories; and the Persian seven Mithra-

gates are merely so many ways of access to different stages of progression for the soul, which correspond to these. The Pythagoreans made wandering through the seven planets a process of purification to the soul.

Other cases yet to be mentioned, in which seven was employed, have perhaps a less definite relation to the union or covenant between God and man. Still, they serve to illustrate the high precedence to which this *sacred* number (as we may now call it with a perceptible and intelligible meaning) had attained, in the ancient world.

The seventh year a Hebrew servant was to go out free, Ex. 21: 2. Jacob served seven years in order to obtain Rachel for a wife; and seven other years for a second wife, Gen. 29: 18, 30. Wedding feasts continued seven days, Judg. 14: 17. Solomon continued the building of the temple seven years, 1 K. 6: 38. Seven priests, with seven trumpets, compassed Jericho seven times, during seven days, and on the seventh went round it seven times, Josh. 6: 4—15. Hannah, in her song of praise for the birth of Samuel, says: "The barren hath borne seven," 1 Sam. 2: 5. Jeremiah says, respecting the desolations at Jerusalem by reason of the siege: "She that hath borne seven, languisheth," Jer. 15: 9. Peter asks the Saviour, whether he ought to forgive seven times, and receives for answer, that he should forgive seventy times seven, Matt. 18: 21, 22. Cain was to be avenged seven-fold if any one slew him, and Lamech seventy times seven, Gen. 4: 15, 24. God threatens his people, in case of disobedience, that he will chastise them seven times, Lev. 26: 28; and again, that they shall go out before their enemies one way, and flee seven ways, Deut. 28: 7, 25. The Nile remained putrid for seven days after Moses had smitten it, Ex. 7: 25. David, after numbering his people, was offered a seven years' famine as an alternative of punishment, 2 Sam. 24: 12, 13. Before Pharaoh, in his dream, stood seven well-favoured and seven lean kine, Gen. 41: 1 seq.; also seven full ears of corn and seven blasted ones; and these betokened seven years of plenty and seven of famine. Noah took with him into the ark seven pairs of clean animals; and after seven days the flood commenced, Gen. 7: 2—4. Silver purified seven times is perfectly pure, Ps. 12: 6. Balaam required Balak to build seven altars, and provide seven oxen and seven rams, Num. 23: 1. Samson was to be bound with seven green withs, in order to cripple his strength; also seven locks of his hair were to be woven into a web, and seven locks afterwards were to be shorn, Judg. 16: 7, 13, 19. The ark was with the Philistines seven months, 1 Sam. 6: 1. Seven sons of Saul were given up to the Gibeonites to be slain, 2 Sam. 21: 9. Hezekiah offered seven bullocks, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven he-goats, to celebrate the cleansing of the temple, 2 Chron. 29: 21. In seven troubles, says Job, no evil shall touch thee, Job 5: 19. Seven things are

an abomination to the Lord, says the author of the book of Proverbs, 6: 16; and again, Wisdom hath hewn out her seven pillars, 9: 1; and once more, The dissembler hath seven abominations in his heart, 26: 25. Give a portion to seven, says the Preacher, Ecc. 11: 2. Seven women, says Isaiah, shall take hold of one man, after a day of great calamity and destruction, Is. 4: 1. The Lord shall smite the Egyptian sea into seven streams, so as to make it passable, as was the Red Sea in the time of the exodus, Is. 11: 15. The light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, Is. 30: 26. Seven months shall be occupied in burying Gog and Magog, Ezek. 39: 12. Their weapons shall be burned for seven years, Ezek. 39: 9. The gate of the outward courts of the new temple shall be entered by seven steps, Ezek. 40: 22; the breadth of the door was to be seven cubits, Ezek. 41: 3. Seven weeks is one of the divisions of time which Daniel makes, that have respect to the coming of the Messiah, Dan. 9: 25. Seven shepherds, says Micah, shall be raised up against the Assyrian, Mic. 5: 5. On the foundation-stone of the new temple were to be engraved seven eyes, symbols of the all-seeing God, Zech. 3: 9. 4: 10. The lamp which Zechariah saw in vision, had seven lights, and seven conductors of oil, Zech. 4: 2. Sevenfold is the enemy of God to be rewarded, Ps. 79: 12. The thief, when discovered is to restore seven-fold, Prov. 6: 31. The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men who can render a reason, Prov. 26: 16. A just man falleth seven times and riseth, Prov. 24: 16. Seven times in a day do I praise thee, Ps. 119: 164. Nebuchadnezzar's furnace was heated seven times more than usual, to destroy the three Jewish confessors, Dan. 3: 19. Seven times were to pass over this king, while in his beastly madness, 4: 16. Seven years is a period more often referred to than can be here brought into the account.

These are only a part of the Old Testament use of the number *seven*. Let us now examine the New.

Seven baskets full of fragments, Mark 8: 8. Out of Mary Magdalene were cast seven devils, Luke 8: 2. The unclean spirit, when cast out, goes and takes with himself seven other spirits, Luke 11: 26.

Let us come, last of all, to the Apocalypse; and we may now look through it without any surprise that a number so significant as *seven*, is to be found in every part of this symbolic book. Here accordingly we find seven churches of Asia addressed; seven spirits before the throne of God; seven golden candlesticks; seven stars; seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God; the seven horns and eyes of the Lamb; seven thunders uttering their voices; a book with seven seals; a dragon with seven heads, and seven crowns; seven angels who sound the seven trumpets; seven other angels who pour out the seven vials of divine indignation; seven heads of the beast representing the seven

mountains on which Rome stood; and seven kings of Rome who complete the circle of the writer's enumeration.

In order further to show the usage of that day in regard to seven, I may also remark, that the book of the *Ascension of Isaiah*, and *the Testament of the twelve Patriarchs*, both productions of the first century, represent the number of heavens as being seven, and often employ this same number elsewhere in the like way with the sacred writers.

Is there, then, after we return from a survey like this, anything strange, unnatural, or even Cabbalistic, in the use of seven in the Apocalypse? *Cabbalistic* it cannot be, although this has often been asserted; for there is no evidence to show that Cabbalism existed so early as this period. *Strange* it would not seem to be, for a Jew thus to employ seven, when the O. Testament was daily in his hands. This is not, indeed, the only number that John employs in a symbolical sense. But still, it is employed with great frequency in a symbolical manner; and so it is in the ancient Jewish Scriptures.

If *numbers* were to be at all employed, in forming the plan and making the developments of the book before us, is it not very obvious, that *three* and *seven*, of all numbers, were the most appropriate? Of *three*, in the trichotomy of the book, I have already spoken. As to *seven*, the feasts, the fasts, the ordinances of worship, the victims for sacrifice, the sprinkling of blood, the seasons for propitiation, for consecration to God, for renewal of a broken covenant, for procuring pardon and peace; in a word, almost all that was outward and symbolical and typical; was in some way regulated by *seven*, under the Jewish dispensation. When therefore a Jew, full of reverence for this sacred number, and feeling in his inmost soul the intense significancy of it, came to the high and holy work of opening to the church a view of the New Dispensation down to the end of the world; could he convey to Christians of his own age or nation more vivid ideas than would be suggested by still employing, in all appropriate cases, the number seven in a symbolical sense? This question is not to be decided by occidental customs and usages, or by occidental taste. The simple question is: Whether a *Hebrew*, writing for Hebrews, and for others of similar taste and habits in many respects; at all events, writing for habitual readers of the O. Testament who lived in the East; is not only to be allowed the *usus loquendi* of his day and nation, but even to be applauded for choosing such a course? Can any one, who takes the whole circle of facts into view, deny for a moment, that the Apocalypse would be read with more delight and interest by the contemporaries of John, for the very reason, that in respect to the symbolical use of sacred numbers, it was conformed to their custom and their taste?

We will now return, for a moment, to the text which stands at the head of these discussions.

Does *seven spirits before the throne of God* mean definitely and literally that number; or is the phrase to be taken in the sense in which seven is so often employed, i. e. in the sense of a complete, adequate, or perfect number of ministering servants, in attendance on the awful Majesty of heaven and earth? I should incline to the latter opinion, principally for two reasons. The first is, that throughout the book, the number seven is nearly everywhere employed in a symbolical way; and analogy would naturally lead us to suppose that such is the case here; the second is, that inasmuch as angels are finite spirits, and are neither omniscient, nor omnipotent, one can hardly suppose the affairs of a boundless, (one might almost say) infinite universe to be committed to so small a number. The book of Daniel, which assigns the guardianship of particular nations to angels of the highest rank, would seem to render it necessary for us to suppose that more than the literal number of *seven* are employed in this way. And when we add to this, that the guardianship of little children is assigned by the Saviour to *presence-angels*, we seem as it were necessitated to suppose, that seven is employed in our text and elsewhere, in relation to archangels, merely in a symbolic way. Still, we know so little of the power of angels, and of the subordinate agencies among them by which duties in trust may be discharged, that it would not become us to make positive assertions in relation to a matter, which can be fully understood only when we obtain access to that *most holy place* which lies behind the vail.

(4) Symbolical use of the number TWELVE.

This number, being beyond the limits of those which are named *units*, must of course be regarded as a *composite* number. As *seven* is made up of four and three *added* together, so twelve is made up of four *multiplied* by three. The symbolical significancy of this number in the Scriptures does not depend, at least so it seems to me, merely on the fact that there were twelve sons of Israel, and twelve tribes named after them. There are other facts in respect to the use of twelve, which serve to show, that its significancy in a tropical way depended on some of the arrangements of the natural world.

From the most ancient times, the division of the Zodiac into twelve constellations, which circumscribe the annual course of the sun, appears to have been made. Corresponding with these divisions of *space*, we might well expect to find the divisions of time, i. e. into twelve months. In accordance with this, are some of the divisions made by heathen nations, which deserve our notice. The Chinese emperor, Yao, placed

twelve Mandarins over his kingdom. The Arabians, descended from Ishmael and Abraham, were divided into twelve tribes, Gen. 17: 20. 25: 16; and even at Mohammed's time, the Saracens with the Nabatheans were divided into twelve tribes. In old Persia, the palace of the king was surrounded by four courts, over which twelve officers presided. Diodorus Sic. (I. 66) says, that 'the most ancient Egyptians were divided into twelve dynasties.' The Greeks were very partial to this number. Twelve confederacies were formed by the Ionians on the coast of Coria. There were twelve associations of the Achaeans in Peloponnesus. Twelve towns were founded by Cecrops in Attica. The Areopagus, in more ancient times, consisted of twelve members. Twelve elders were appointed by the Phaeacians as counsellors for the king. In Italy we find the Etruscans arranging their magistrates by twelves. The *twelve tables* of the Romans are well known. In ancient Germany there were twelve priests of Odin. Plato divides his ideal Republic into twelve parts; and its metropolis again in the same way. See Bähr Symbolik, I. p. 201 seq. with authorities cited.

In the Scriptures, we might naturally expect to find the number *twelve* often introduced, on account of the twelve tribes of Israel. Thus in Ex. 15: 27, twelve fountains of water at Elim; Ex. 24: 4, twelve pillars around the altar; Lev. 24: 5, twelve cakes of show-bread; Ex. 28: 10, 21, twelve gems in the breast-plate of the high-priest; Num. 7: 3, 87. 29: 17, offerings of different kinds by twelves; Num. 7: 84—87, various vessels to be made for the temple by twelves; Num. 13: 3 seq. twelve spies to the land of Canaan; Josh. 4: 3, twelve stones from the Jordan carried by twelve men, and thrown into a monumental heap; 1 K. 4: 7, 26, twelve praefects of Solomon's household, and twelve thousand horsemen; 1 K. 7: 25, twelve brazen oxen supporting the laver of the temple; 1 K. 10: 20, twelve brazen lions near the throne; Ezek. 43: 16, the altar twelve cubits long and broad; not to mention many other twelves. In the New Testament, the twelve apostles take the lead. In the Apocalypse we have twelve thousand in each of the twelve tribes who are sealed in the forehead as the servants of God, Rev. 7: 4 seq. In Rev. 21: 12 seq., we have an account of the new Jerusalem, with twelve gates (comp. Ezek. 48: 31 seq.), and twelve angels to keep them, and the names of the twelve tribes are written on them; there are also twelve rows of stones in the foundation of the walls on which the names of the twelve apostles are inscribed. Besides all this, the city measures twelve thousand furlongs, and its wall is twelve times twelve cubits high.

Most of these twelves, it will be easily perceived, have a reference to the twelve tribes of Israel. Yet in some of the cases it would be difficult to trace this historical relation. When the inheritance of the land

of Canaan is divided, the tribe of Levi is excluded from a share, and then the tribe of Joseph is subdivided in order to complete the number twelve. So in Rev. vii, while the tribe of Dan is omitted, the number twelve is made up in like manner. In the same chapter, the number 144,000 must of course be used symbolically, as no one will contend that just 12,000 were saved out of each tribe.

That the number twelve is not so frequently employed symbolically in the Scriptures, as the other numbers already mentioned, is plain. But that it occasionally partakes of the like significancy with them, one cannot well question, when he takes into view the heathen and the sacred use of it.

EXCURSUS III.

Rev. XIII. 3. *Καὶ μίαν ἐκ τῶν κεφαλῶν αὐτοῦ ὡς ἐσφαγμένην εἰς θάνατον, καὶ ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ ἐθεραπεύθη.*

Rev. XVII. 8. *Τὸ θηρίον ὃ εἶδες, ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι, καὶ μέλλει ἀναβαίνειν ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγειν . . . τὸ θηρίον ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι, καὶ πάρεσται.* (9, 10) *Αἱ ἑπτὰ κεφαλαὶ . . . βασιλεῖς ἑπτά εἰσιν. Οἱ πέντε ἔπεσαν, ὁ εἷς ἐστίν, ἄλλος οὔπω ἦλθε, καὶ ὅταν ἔλθῃ, ὀλίγον αὐτὸν δεῖ μεῖναι.* (11) *Καὶ τὸ θηρίον ὃ ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι, καὶ αὐτὸς ὄγδοός ἐστι, καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἑπτά ἐστι, καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγει.*

I have joined these passages together, because in all probability they ought to be connected. They have been regarded as intimately connected by most of the recent commentators on the Apocalypse; and the very nature of chap. xvii. shows that this is proper.

It is now generally agreed also, by the same interpreters, that Rev. 13: 3 and 17: 9, 10 relate to the *emperors* upon the throne of Rome. They are indeed named *kings* (*βασιλεῖς*) by John; but this was a customary name given by Greek writers to the Roman chiefs; although *ἄναξ* and *μονάρχης* are sometimes employed. The importance of a right understanding of the passages before us, in respect to the interpretation of chap. xiii—xix, and also in regard to fixing the *date* of the whole book, must be evident at once to every intelligent reader.

I. An important question arises in regard to the personage symbolized by the *one head*, which is seemingly slain but afterwards recovers. In the Comm. on 13: 3, I have briefly assigned reasons, why we cannot suppose Julius Caesar to be meant. The question now comes up for

discussion, as there proposed, whether we can, with any good degree of probability, fix upon Nero as the individual here meant to be described.

To examine the boundless conjectures that have been resorted to, for the sake of explaining the text before us, would occupy quite too much room here, and would in no way serve for the edification of the reader. Can it be rationally supposed, that the author did not intend to be understood by intelligent readers of his own time? And if he did, how could he expect to be understood, in case the interpretation of his writing depended merely on some fanciful conceit or invention of ingenuity? He could not; and therefore we may take it for granted, that his apparently enigmatical expressions found an easy solution among well-informed readers, by reason of their knowledge either of certain facts, or of modes of representation then usual, or of popular belief at the time when the Apocalypse was written. Guided by these simple principles, then, let us resort to the opinions and views of the day, respecting the imperial tyrant who was then laying waste the heritage of God.

In the various histories of Nero's reign, by Tacitus, Suetonius, Dio, and others, we may find circumstances related which seem to cast light on 13: 3, and of course on chap. 17: 8—11. If so, they are well worthy of consideration.

The leading passage is in Suetonius: "It was formerly (olim) predicted by fortune-tellers (a mathematicis, *astrologers*) to Nero, that he would at some time be reduced to a state of destitution. Hence that famous adage of his: *τὸ τέχνιον πᾶσα γαῖα τρέφει.* On account of this [prediction], forsooth, he expected an apology would more readily be made for him, because he cultivated the music of the harp, an art grateful to him as a prince, and one that would be necessary for him as a private person. Some [astrologers], however, promised him the dominion of the East; some, particularly the kingdom of Jerusalem; many, the restoration of all his former fortune;" Suet. Nero, 40. Here seem plainly to be the elements of a report respecting Nero, which was spread wide and broad through the empire. It was modified into many different shapes, either by accidental circumstances, or by the hopes and fears of men who hated the tyrant.

It should be noted, that Suetonius states this prediction of the soothsayers to have taken place *early* in the reign of Nero, *olim*. There was time then to spread it all around the provinces, long before Nero's death; and as the great mass of people was wishing for his destruction, or at least that he might be driven from the throne, nothing can be more probable, than that the populace were acquainted with the *prediction*, that Nero would be deprived of his imperial office.

How *extensive* this report was, and what radical hold it took of the feelings of the populace, and even of Christians, may be easily learned

from numerous sources, both heathen and Christian. Not only so, but the expectation of Nero's reviviscence was cherished by some, and feared by others, even for some centuries after his assassination. Duly to support the exegesis that I feel constrained to give of the text before us, it will be necessary to adduce some satisfactory evidence of the statements just made, and present it to the reader's mind.

Suetonius notes, at the close of his account of Nero (c. 57), that notwithstanding the general joy at the tyrant's death, "there were some, who for a long time adorned his tomb with spring and summer flowers. Moreover, at one time they would set up *imagines praetextatas* of him in the Rostrum; at another they would proclaim edicts, as if he were living and would shortly return, to the sore misfortune of his enemies."

Thus much for the state of the thing at Rome; all of which is most evidently connected with the prediction of the soothsayers. Let us see how the matter was, even in the extremest bounds of the Roman empire. Suetonius (ubi sup.) proceeds: "Moreover Vologeses, king of the Parthians, ambassadors being sent to the Senate for the sake of renewing an alliance, earnestly besought that the memory of Nero might be cherished. Finally, twenty years after this, when I was a youth, there arose a person of uncertain origin, who boasted that he was Nero; and so attractive was his name among the Parthians, that he was aided by them with much zeal, and finally was given up with great reluctance." The expectation, therefore, that Nero was to reappear, and renew his former fortune, was plainly cherished by this most distant and barbarous people. This account is the more to be relied on, inasmuch as Suetonius was himself contemporary with the occurrence which he relates.

Tacitus has given us several hints respecting the same phenomena to which Suetonius has adverted. Thus (Hist. II. 8) he says: "About the same time [A. U. C. 823 = A. D. 71], Achaia and Asia were terrified without any good reason (falso), as if Nero were coming; reports being various respecting his death, and many on this account imagining and believing that he was still alive." It should be observed here, that the very region in which John lived (Asia), is here designated by Tacitus as one that was filled with alarm at the apprehended reäppearance of Nero. This was three years after his death; and it therefore shows, how strongly the fear, that what the soothsayers had predicted respecting Nero would come to pass, had taken hold of the public mind, and how extensively rumors of such a nature concerning him had been spread and believed.

Again (Hist. I. 2) he says: "The Parthians were near to engaging in war, through the deception of a pretended Nero." The same thing, as we have already seen, is said by Suetonius (c. 57), with more ample explanation.

Dio Chrysostom (Orat. de Pulchritud. p. 371) says: "Those around him [Nero] left him as it were to destroy himself; for even to the present time this is not certain. . . . Even now all still desire him to live, and most even suppose that he is alive." Dio was a contemporary of Vespasian, and the above words were doubtless written not long after Nero's death. We see in them evidence, that in the provinces abroad the public opinion was divided, a part supposing Nero to be dead and yet wishing him alive, but most supposing that "his deadly wound was healed," i. e. that he had, after all, survived the attacks of his assassins.

Dio Cassius (edit. Leuncl. p. 732) relates, that 'in the time of Otho, who succeeded Galba, a person made his appearance at Rome, [his name he does not mention], who gave himself out for Nero, but was speedily taken and executed.'

In the time of Titus (A. D. 79) a Pseudo-Nero made his appearance in Asia Minor, and gained a party there; afterward he went to the Euphrates, and there greatly enlarged this party; and finally he resorted to the king of the Parthians, who received him with favour, and made arrangements to attack the Romans; Zonaras, Vit. Tit. p. 578. C.

We have already seen, as related by Suetonius, that, some ten years later than this, another Pseudo-Nero appeared among the Parthians. Within this small number of years, then, we have two phenomena of this kind in Parthia, and two in Asia Minor; the latter two, in A. D. 71 and 79. These, in addition to the like phenomena at Rome show that a deep persuasion in respect to Nero's reappearance must have existed in the minds of the community at large, in order that it could be possible for impostors to play such a part with so much success.

Thus much for the general opinion and feelings of the *heathen* world respecting Nero. It lies upon the face of the matter, that there was a wide-spread and a kind of undefined hope or fear, (according to the political feelings of individuals), that Nero, after his reported and apparent death, would reappear to the terror and confusion of his enemies.

Nor was this feeling confined to the heathen subjects of the empire. *Christians* far and near participated in it more or less. The evidences of this are ample; and for our present purpose some of them must be produced.

In the Sibylline Oracles (edit. Gallaeus), that farrago of soothsayers honest and dishonest, that collect of streams from sources widely separated by space and time, we find most abundant recognition of the phenomena already disclosed. Thus in Lib. IV. p. 520 seq. the vaticinator says: "Then a great king, as a fugitive from Italy, concealed, perfidious, will fly beyond the river Euphrates, when he shall perpe-

trate the horrid crime of matricide, and do many other evils, confiding in his power. Many, moreover, around the temple of Rome shall moisten the earth with blood, when he has fled beyond his native land. . . . Then the strife of excited war shall invade the West, and the great Fugitive of Rome, bearing aloft his spear, passing the Euphrates with many thousands of men, etc." How exactly this accords with the tenor of the vaticination recorded by Suetonius, (Nero, 40), as cited above, scarcely needs to be remarked. This portion of the Sib. Oracles, appears to have been written by a Christian, about A. D. 80; see Bleek in the Theol. Zeitschrift, etc., of Schleiermacher, De Wette, and Lücke, Heft I. p. 244 seq.

Again, Lib. V. p. 547, another writer says: "He who shall obtain the mark of *fifty*, [i. e. whose name begins with N = 50, viz. Nero], will be lord; a horrid serpent breathing out grievous war; who will destroy the outstretched arms of her who bore him . . . he shall be secretly destroyed. Then shall he return, making himself equal to a god. But he [God] will demonstrate that he is not one." This was written probably about A. D. 120, under Adrian; but the time assumed in the description is of course near the commencement of the reign of Nero; see Bleek in Zeitschrift, H. II. p. 172 seq. Here the same view is given as before, with only a slight variation in the manner of the statement. Nero's *apparent* death and reviviscence is the subject of both.

In the same book, p. 560, is a very long passage respecting Nero, of which I shall exhibit only a part: "Then he shall lay waste the whole land . . . he who is barbarous, powerful, greatly to be dreaded, madly raving, tossing about thy dead upon the shore in great multitudes. All Asia, falling upon the ground, shall weep. . . . He who has won over the Persians, shall make war upon Egypt, killing every man. . . . He shall fly from the West with light steps, wasting the whole land, and making it desolate." In the sequel Nero is represented as invading "the city of the blessed" [Jerusalem], and perishing there by the hands of an all powerful king [Messiah]; after which the world is to come to an end. The idea, that Nero was the *man of sin* mentioned by Paul, and the *Antichrist* spoken of so often in the epistles of John, prevailed extensively, and for a long time, in the early church. The writer of the Oracle just quoted was plainly of the same opinion. The reference to Nero's *oriental* dominion is plain and explicit here. The age of the author was probably that of Adrian, i. e. about A. D. 117—135. See Bleek, ut sup. Heft II. p. 177.

Another passage more graphic still may be found in Lib. V. p. 573 seq. I give only a small part of it: "The great king of great Rome . . . a man making himself equal to God, whom (as they say) Jupiter or worshipful Juno produced, . . . this fearful and shameless king will

flee from Babylon [Rome], whom all mortals abhor, specially all good men, for he has destroyed multitudes, and laid hands on her who bore him. . . . He will repair to the kings of the Medes and Persians, the first object of his love. . . . The great city [Jerusalem] and the righteous people have they destroyed. But when the great star shall shine, after the fourth year, [when Nero shall reappear as a comet, after his four years persecution against Christians and Jews have closed], which will destroy all the land . . . this great star will burn up the wide ocean, and Babylon [Rome] itself, . . . by means of which many faithful and pious Hebrews have perished, and also the true temple. . . . Thou [Rome] shalt remain altogether desolate, thou shalt perish forever." Comp. Rev. 17: 16, where Nero, in conjunction with provincial kings, is represented as laying waste Rome itself. The writer of this portion of Lib. V. of the Oracles (vs. 115—178), can hardly be supposed, however, to have seen the Apocalypse; for the vaticination before us was probably written soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, since it expresses the most bitter feelings against Rome as the author of it. The writer was probably a Jew. As to the very *early* composition of the piece, Bleek (ubi sup. p. 179 seq.) fully asserts it.

In Lib. V. p. 592 seq., Corinth is addressed, and with others, is threatened with destruction and slaughter by 'the king who *clandestinely makes his escape*, [Nero who escapes from his assassins], and who has devoured the flesh of his parents [slain his mother]; "for God alone hath given him to do such things as no one of all former kings has done." Comp. Rev. 17: 17. This was probably written not long after the destruction of Jerusalem, and by a Jew. Bleek p. 181 seq.

Lib. V. p. 619 seq., composed soon after Nero's death, presents the following passage: "The matricide shall come from the ends of the earth, inconsiderate, devising bitter reproaches, who will lay waste every land, and obtain dominion over all. . . . He will destroy that land without delay, by means of which he perished, [destroy Rome which assailed him]; he will destroy multitudes of men and great kings; he will burn up all, as in times past he did when in another condition," [i. e. he will burn Rome a second time]. Most probably this was written by a Jew; and there are some striking resemblances in it to Rev. 17: 11, 16, 17, which the careful reader can scarcely overlook.

In Lib. VIII. p. 714 seq. is another passage, representing Nero as coming from Asia, with the indignation of a destroyer. Black blood follows the steps of the great monster (θήρ). "The dog has produced a lion which will devour the flock," [Nero's assassins have turned him from a dog into a lion, i. e. they have infuriated him by reason of their assault]. "But his sceptre shall be taken away, and he shall go down to Hades." Comp. Rev. 17: 8, 11, *μέλλει ἀναβαίνειν ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου, καὶ*

εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγειν. The vaticination above quoted was probably written in the time of M. Aurelius, about A. D. 170—180, and it follows in the track of all the preceding passages, which assume the return of Nero from the East, and his devastations of Rome in conjunction with allied kings.

Other passages of the like tenor, the reader may find in Lib. VIII. p. 688 seq.; and again in Lib. VIII. p. 693 seq. Ib. p. 715 seq. I have indeed quoted but a small part of what is said of Nero. The perusal of the whole must be left to the reader, and it will overwhelm him with conviction, that there was spread far and wide abroad, for a long time after Nero's death, but specially for the first fifteen or twenty years, an anxious fear and even trembling expectation of Nero's reappearance, who would then pervade his former dominions like an incarnate demon, and from motives of revenge lay them waste with fire and sword.

How widely diffused and deeply rooted in the minds of the great community such a fear or expectation respecting Nero was, is manifest enough from its permanence among the *churches*, even centuries after the death of Nero. Thus in the brief Commentary of Victorinus Petavionensis († 303), he expressly names *Nero* as the beast who received the deadly wound, and was to be raised up again to be the scourge of the Jews; in Biblioth. Max. III. p. 420. D.

Lactantius (fl. 320) in his treatise *De Morte Persecutorum*, c. 2, rejects the sentiment that Nero would be raised up again, but distinctly recognizes the existence of such a view even in his time: "Cast down from the lofty eminence of his empire, and rolled from its height, the impotent tyrant [Nero] of a sudden disappeared, so that no place of burial in the land appeared for so evil a beast. Thence some silly persons suppose him to have been conveyed away and kept alive; according to the words of the Sibyl, that the matricide exile should come from the extremities [of the empire], so that he who was first in persecution, should also be the last persecutor, and should precede the coming of Antichrist . . . in the same manner they think Nero will come . . . the precursor and forerunner of the devil, coming to lay waste the earth and destroy the human race."

Down to so late a period as the close of the third century we find clear traces of the opinion still widely diffused in the church, that Nero was yet to return. Thus Sulpicius Severus, the ecclesiastical historian of that period, Hist. Sac. II. 28: "Nero . . . the basest of all men and even of monsters, was well worthy of being the first persecutor; I know not whether he may be the last, since it is the current opinion of many, that he is yet to come as Antichrist." Again in II. 29: "It is uncertain whether he [Nero] destroyed himself. . . . Whence it is believed,

that although he may have pierced himself with a sword, yet he was saved by the cure of his wound; in accordance with that which is written [Rev. 13: 3]: And his deadly wound was healed. At the close of the age [gospel-age], he is to be sent again, that he may exercise the mystery of iniquity."

In Dial. II. c. 14, where the same writer celebrates the virtues of Martinus as a most eminent saint, Sulpicius states, that he inquired of him respecting the *end of the world.* Martinus replied, that "Nero and Antichrist must first come; that Nero would reign in the West over ten subjugated kings, and that persecution would be carried on by him in order that the idols of the heathen might be worshipped."

Finally, in his work De Civit. Dei, XX. 19, Augustine says: "What means the declaration, that the mystery of iniquity already works? . . . Some suppose this to be spoken of the Roman emperor, and therefore Paul did not speak in plain words, because he would not incur the charge of calumny for having spoken evil of the Roman emperor; although he always expected, that what he had said would be understood as applying to Nero, whose doings already appeared like to those of Antichrist. Hence it was that some suspected, *that he would rise from the dead as Antichrist.* Others supposed he was not actually slain, but had only withdrawn himself, that he might seem to be dead, and that he was concealed, while living in the vigour of his age and when he was supposed to be extinct, until in his time he would be revealed [2 Thess. 2: 6], and restored to his kingdom. But this so great presumption is very wonderful to me," etc.

Past all doubt, then, many of the early churches, far and near, believed or feared a reappearance of Nero, in the same character which he exhibited in early life. Whence did they derive this belief or fear? Either from the vaticination of the astrologers, as recorded by Suetonius and repeated by others, or else through the medium of the text before us. *I do* NOT *say, that John meant to convey the impression, that Nero would actually revive, and reappear on the stage of action; for this I do not believe.* But thus much I am compelled to believe, from the general if not universal impression of the times, viz., that John here recognizes, and intends that others should recognize, Nero, by pointing to an individual respecting whom reports were everywhere current, such as have been exhibited above. The fullest and most ample recognition of these reports is in the Sibylline Oracles. There we have them from the time when Nero died, down to the time of M. Aurelius, about A. D. 170—180. Most of them seem, also, to be wholly independent of the Apocalypse; indeed several of them are by *Jewish* writers; for Jews, as well as Christians, were persecuted by Nero, and were highly exasperated against him on account of his attack upon Palestine. All this, in con-

junction with the fact stated by Suetonius, viz., that in the *early* part of Nero's life (*olim*), the soothsayers had predicted his degradation and subsequent restoration, shows how much ground there was for the writer of the Apocalypse to believe, that his intimations respecting Nero would be well understood by intelligent readers. To name the Roman emperor and tyrant directly, in the way of reproach, would have been construed by the magistracy at once as libellous or as an act of treason; to describe him so that ὁ ἔχων νοῦν might penetrate the σοφία veiled under the writer's diction, (Rev. 13: 18), was the part of prudence and of duty united.

There are some circumstances tending much to confirm the view of the subject which has now been taken, and which I have not seen distinctly noted by any of the commentators. These are the somewhat veiled, but still sufficiently plain, intelligible, and oft repeated cautions of the writer of the Apocalypse, that the reader should well weigh his words, and not give them an interpretation such as a superficial reading might suggest. Thus after having introduced the beast from the sea, and mentioned the wound of one of his heads, his restoration, and his persecution of the church, he stops short at once and suggests the admonition: *Εἴ τις ἔχει οὖς, ἀκουσάτω*, i. e. let him diligently and cautiously attend to what has been said; 13: 9. To make plainer the hint already given, as to the person meant, he adds: "If any one sends away into exile, he shall go away into exile; if any one kills with the sword, he shall be slain with the sword," v. 10. That is, Nero, who banishes and kills, shall himself go into exile and be slain. With great force he adds: 'Here is need of patience and faith on the part of all saints;' i. e. these graces are needed in circumstances such as the present.

Again; after the introduction of the second beast, and the exhibition of what was done by him to further the impious claims of the first beast, he again suggests, in relation to the first beast: "Here is σοφία; let him who hath intelligence reckon the number of the beast," i. e. see what name will result from combining letters whose numerical value equals 666; see 13: 18. Plainly the writer means to say, that a hasty or superficial perusal of his work will not truly develope his veiled meaning. There is σοφία in it, and νοῦς is needed in order to discover it.

More explicitly still does the writer show, in chap. xvii, that he must be cautiously read and interpreted. After twice mentioning *the beast that was, and is not, and will ascend from the abyss* (v. 8), he immediately adds: *Here is a meaning which comprises wisdom*, or *Here an understanding* [is needed] *which possesses sagacity.* Interpreted in either way the meaning of the passage is, that in order to understand *what* or *who* the beast is, *which was, and is not, and will reappear,* some special sagacity and care are needed.

May we not take it for granted, moreover, that the writer expects those parts of his book, respecting which he has given a caution so often repeated, not to be interpreted merely by the letter, or according to the first appearance of the words, but by a most considerate attention to the actual state of things? Interpreted in the ordinary way, we might make out from our text the meaning, that Nero had already been wounded and had recovered, and was persecuting the church with fury after his recovery. But who can for a moment suppose, that John directly intended to say a thing here, which every sensible and well informed person at Ephesus of course could and would contradict? For surely the *reality* of the whole affair must be placed in the light of day, at that city (Ephesus) which was the Romish metropolis of Asia Minor. But inasmuch as his language might seem to import so much, he guards the reader against understanding it merely according to its first appearance. Special *intelligence* and *wisdom* are needed to develope its true import. Why it was thus veiled and guarded, has been already explained. And now all that appears to be requisite is, to suppose that John, in order to avoid using Nero's proper name, resorted to a kind of *periphrasis*, founded on the vaticination not only recorded by Suetonius, but known (as it would seem) throughout the Roman empire. The reader would of course inquire: Who is symbolized by the beast from the sea? The answer of John, as the text now stands, seems to be: 'He concerning whom it was said, that he should be assaulted and wounded, and yet should recover from the wound, and resume his odious and tyrannical supremacy?' That John says *he saw the wound*, etc., in his vision, does not alter the nature of the case at all, when we once consider the use of symbols; and specially when we once suppose, (which seems to be quite plain), that all which John here says of this nature, is evidently designed merely to make the disclosure in an indirect way respecting the person of the reigning tyrant. John presents what every sensible man might recognize as belonging to a description of Nero, both in chap. xiii. and xvii, the latter chapter being *ex professo* only of an *exegetical* nature. The improbability that John himself supposed or believed that Nero would reappear after his death, seems to me not to need any demonstration. Even if we should suppose that his inspiration might be doubted, yet a man as enlightened as John cannot well be imagined to have credited such a figment. Why may he not then be regarded as introducing such a description, only and merely to accomplish the design of *indirectly* disclosing who was symbolized by the beast?

When the Saviour speaks of 'unclean spirits being cast out by the *children of the Pharisees*' (Matt. 12: 27); and when he speaks again of 'unclean spirits as walking through dry or desert places seeking rest and finding none' (Matt. 12: 43); did he not bring before the minds of his

hearers the *popular* view of this subject merely, and not his own? And might not John, in the case before us, and for a wise and prudent end, appeal to the popular belief, or fear, or representation respecting Nero, merely for the sake of avoiding the open proclamation of his name, and yet with the expectation that he might be rightly understood?

There is a further, and seemingly more imperious reason for such a method of interpretation as has been proposed. This is, that all the other solutions which have been attempted of several passages in chaps. xiii. xvii, are utterly unsupported by any philological basis, usus loquendi, or historical facts appropriate to the time in which the Apocalypse was written. But on the ground now assumed, all these texts become quite intelligible and appropriate. E. g. 13: 3, the apparently fatal wound of the beast and his recovery are no longer in the dark; Rev. 17: 8, 11, the beast which was, and is not, and will ascend from the abyss or make his appearance (*πάρεσται*), is plain when placed in the light of popular belief which was grounded on the vaticination of the astrologers as related by Suetonius; and the most mysterious passage of all: *He is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth to destruction*, becomes quite plain. Nero, one of the first *seven* emperors symbolized by the seven heads of the beast (v. 10), reappears as an *eighth*, although he belonged to the seven, and thus a kind of double enumeration is applied to him. But all this lies in day-light, when the common fear or belief respecting his reappearance is assumed as the basis of explanation. On any other ground yet produced, this verse seems quite inexplicable. At all events, nothing more than mere conjecture has been applied to it; it seems as if nothing else could be applied, in case this historical illustration is rejected.

Why then should we hesitate to admit an explanation so easy, and so satisfactory, and grounded in the history of the times, as has been most amply developed? An explanation, too, which harmonizes altogether with the cautious reserve of John, as to direct disclosure respecting the Roman emperor; and also with the object of his book, which was to console persecuted Christians with the hope of speedy relief. The only objection, which seems to have much weight in it, is, that the language appears to intimate, that John himself believed the common reports respecting Nero. But does not the language of the Saviour, as quoted above, also seem to indicate that he admitted the Jewish traditional doctrine respecting casting out demons, and the wandering of evil spirits in deserts? Yet who can believe that his mind admitted the truth of such accounts respecting demons? So in the case before us; John appeals to the popular belief, merely in order to designate who is symbolized by the beast; but every time he has done so, he has put the reader upon his guard, by warning him not to apply his words merely in the

usual manner in which the rest of his book is interpreted. Why, I ask, has he suggested these repeated cautions here, and not elsewhere in the whole Apocalypse? I know of no other satisfactory answer to this, than the one which has already been given. John expected his readers to make cautious and diligent search for the meaning of words, which otherwise might appear ambiguous, or be misunderstood.

II. Another important question arises out of a part of Rev. 17: 10, *Οἱ πέντε ἔπεσαν*, i. e. five Roman emperors had fallen, when the writer was composing the Apocalypse. *Where then shall we commence the reckoning? With Julius Caesar, or with Augustus?*

Most of the recent interpreters of distinction have decided in favour of commencing with *Augustus*. Two reasons may be assigned for their so doing; the one, that they are seemingly supported in this mode of reckoning by some distinguished Roman historians; the other, that such a mode of reckoning best agrees with what they regard as the more easy and natural mode of interpreting the passages which stand at the head of this Excursus.

But as the *author's* method of reckoning is not dependent on any recent modes of interpretation, the main and simple question seems to be: *Whether there is adequate support to be found, in ancient historians or chronographers, for the method of reckoning which begins with* AUGUSTUS?

Lücke has best presented the strength of the argument in favour of this method; Einleit. pp. 250 seq. Let us first examine his authorities; we may then examine the testimony of those authors, whose mode of reckoning commences with Julius Caesar.

Lücke first appeals to Tacitus (Annal. I. 1), who says: "Lepidi atque Antonii arma in Augustum cessere; qui cuncta, discordiis civilibus fessa, nomine *Principis* sub imperium accepit." But here Tacitus alludes evidently to two things: the first, that Julius Caesar, although for some years the sole and actual Head of the Roman Empire, yet repeatedly refused the title of *king* or *prince*, which Augustus accepted; the second, that an *established* and *uninterrupted* order of kings or princes began with Augustus. From the death of Julius Caesar to the establishment of Augustus on the throne, some *twelve* years intervened, during which the struggles for popular liberty and the contests between contending factions were carried on. Nothing more than that the uninterrupted series of monarchs followed these commotions and began with Augustus, is here declared by Tacitus; for nothing can be more certain, than that Julius Caesar was generally regarded by the Romans as *autocrat*, *king*, *prince*, or *emperor*. He was not only so-called, but was in fact what he was said by the popular voice to be. Tacitus does not say here that Augustus *first* received the name of *Prince*.

Again, Lücke appeals to Tacitus, Hist. I. 1: "Postquam bellatum apud Actium, atque omnem potentiam ad unum conferri pacis interfuit, magna illa ingenia," etc. But here exactly the same state of things is referred to as in Annal. I. 1, namely, the twelve years of civil commotion which had preceded, and the *permanent* establishment of the Roman monarchy in the person of Augustus.

So with the other authorities to which Lücke appeals. Aurelius Victor (fl. 350), in his *Hist. Abbrev. de Caesaribus*, c. I. 1, says: "Anno 722 etiam mos Romae incessit uni prorsus pariendi." Here the word *mos* refers us again to the establishment of *uninterrupted* monarchy. So again, more explicitly, in Victor's Epitome, c. I. 1: "Anno 722, ab exactis regibus 480, mos Romae *repetitus* uni prorsus pariendi, pro rege *Imperatori*, vel sanctiori nomine *Augusto*, appellato." Here the *mos repetitus*, and the permanent names of *Imperator* and *Augustus*, are plainly the objects which guide the writer's reckoning.

Sextus Rufus (cap. 2), to whom Lücke has also appealed, but has not quoted, I have not been able to procure; but an author so late, and so little known, cannot avail much in a case like the present.

John Malalas, a chronographer of Cent. IX. (see Opp. edit. Bonn. 1831, p. 49 Proleg.), is also counted by Lücke as reckoning Augustus to be the first emperor or king. The passage runs thus: *Ἐγένετο βασιλεὺς Ῥωμαίων πρῶτος καὶ μόνος καὶ ὀργιοφάντης, ὁ αὐτὸς θειότατος Αὔγουστος* (p. 225); which is thus translated: Idem divinissimus Augustus, Romanorum imperator et Monarcha primus, Sacrorumque Antistes erat. Here *μόνος* (*sole*) is rendered *monarcha;* which seems to be the meaning, for *βασιλεύς* is implied. The Chronicon Paschale (p. 364 ed. Bonn.) quotes one Sosibius (omitted by Lücke) as saying: *πρῶτος ἐγένετο βασιλεύς Ῥωμαίων μονάρχης ὁ Αὔγουστος*; which accords, as to the main point, with Malalas. How much Malalas may be reckoned on as to *accuracy*, may be estimated, when we find him representing Nero as dying in his 69th year, in consequence of poison administered (as it would seem) by Grecian priests! p. 258. Nero died, as Dion Cassius says, at the age of thirty years and nine months; Lib. 63, ad fin.

Once more; the *twelfth* book of the Sibylline Oracles, (recently brought to light by Angelo Mai in his Scriptt. Vet. nova Collectio, III. Pars 3, p. 202 seq.), is said by Lücke to begin the series with Augustus. The book is not within my reach; but as it was written, (according to Lücke, Einl. p. 123), so late as about A. D. 222, and contradicts the earlier mode of reckoning in Orac. Sib. Lib. V. (p. 545. edit. Opsop.), which begins with Julius Caesar, we cannot lay much stress upon it. Books III. IV. V. of these Oracles were extant at least as early as A. D. 150; so that the testimony in book V. is much more weighty than that in Lib. XII.

The sum of all the evidence produced then is, that Tacitus speaks twice of *sole* regency as conferred on Augustus after the tumults and civil wars which followed the death of Julius Caesar, and as commencing its permanency with him. To the same purpose, and more evidently still in the same way, does Aurelius Victor speak, about the middle of the fourth century. For the rest, Sextus Rufus, Malalas, and the twelfth book of the Sibylline Oracles, can have but little weight in deciding the question: What, in the time of John, was the *Jewish* mode of reckoning the Roman emperors? For it will be admitted, I may presume, from the deep Hebrew colouring which everywhere pervades the Apocalypse, that the author spoke, with regard to this subject, in the usual manner of the Hebrews of his day. We now come to a second inquiry:

(2) *Was the method of reckoning by commencing with* JULIUS CAESAR, *common among both Romans and Jews?*

Certainly it was among the Romans whenever they spoke of the subject generically, and not in reference (like Tacitus and Victor) to a period when uninterrupted monarchy began. Thus the celebrated work of Suetonius on the *Twelve Caesars*, (he flourished but a few years after the Apocalypse was written), begins with Julius Caesar as the first. The history of Dion Cassius begins in the same way, and observes the same order. So also other contemporary writings, which are of Christian origin. E. g. Orac. Sibyllina, V. 12 (p. 545 edit. Ops.) says, in reference to Julius Caesar: *Ἔσται ἄναξ πρώτιστος, ὅς τις δέκα δὶς κορυφώσει Γράμματος ἀρχομένου*, i. e. 'he shall be the *first* king, the commencing letter of whose name [*K* in *Καῖσαρ*] shall amount to twice ten;' $\varkappa = 20$.

In 4 Ezra 12: 15 the writer says: "Nam *secundus* incipiet regnare, et ipse tenebit [regnum] amplius tempus prae duodecim," i. e. 'the *second* shall begin to reign, and he shall hold [dominion] a longer time than any of the twelve,' viz. than any of the twelve Caesars. Augustus reigned forty-four years, about one-third part of the whole period of the twelve. Lücke says that the meaning of this passage is disputed. It may be so; but, as it seems to me, without any good reason. The context respects the Roman empire; and Augustus is here plainly called *secundus*. This fourth book of Ezra (as we have seen, Vol. I. p. 85), was written soon after the death of Domitian, the last of the Caesars. Had not this been so, the author would have probably reckoned more than *twelve* kings. He stops now with the twelfth.

The most decisive of all is the testimony of Josephus, in regard to Jewish as well as Roman custom. As he wrote his works for both Romans and Jews, there is no probability that he would adopt a mode of reckoning different from that which was common to both. Had there been any marked difference between the two in the mode of reckoning,

it would have been natural for him to note it. This he has not done, but he says simply: *Τελευτᾷ Καῖσαρ, δεύτερος μὲν Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτωρ γενόμενος*, 'Caesar [Augustus] died, being the *second* emperor of the Romans.' Immediately after: *Τιβέριος Νέρων . . . τρίτος οὗτος αὐτοκράτωρ*, 'Tiberius, the *third* emperor;' Antiq. XVIII. c. 2. § 2. Again in XVIII. c. 6. § 10, *Γάϊος δὲ ἦν αὐτοκράτωρ τέταρτος*, 'Caius [Caligula] was the *fourth* emperor.' Once more in XIX. c. 1. § 11, he speaks of [Julius] Caesar, as "the *first* who transferred the power of the people to himself." Could the Jews naturally have adopted any other method of reckoning the Roman emperors, than that which they had received from the Romans who governed them? And specially, would Josephus, writing as he did under the auspices of the Romans and for them, have adopted a mode of reckoning different from the customary one?

The *Chronicon Paschale* or *Fasti Siculi*, the first part of which appears to have been composed about the middle of the fourth century, says: *Ἰούλιος Καῖσαρ πρῶτος Ῥωμαίων . . . μονάρχης* (p. 353 edit. Bonn.). Again: *Ῥωμαίων δεύτερος ἐβασίλευσεν Καῖσαρ Σεβαστὸς Αὔγουστος*, p. 360.

Georgius Syncellus († 800), in his *Chronography*, says: *Αὔγουστος κρατήσας μετὰ Γ. Ι. Καίσαρα τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῆς*; and shortly after, *Τιβέριον . . . Ῥωμαίων τρίτον ἀνέδειξεν* [*Αὔγουστος*] *αὐτοκράτορα*, pp. 602, 603, edit. Bonn. So in p. 574: *Ῥωμαίων μόναρχος Γ. Ι. Καῖσαρ ἔτη ε'*, i. e. 'Julius Caesar was monarch five years.' Again: *Ἰούλιος ἔτη ε' μοναρχήσας κ. τ. λ*, ibid.

Nicephorus Patriarcha († 824) in his Compend of Chronography (p. 746, edit. Bonn.), says: *Μετὰ Αὔγουστον, Ῥωμαίων τρίτος ἐβασίλευσε Τιβέριος*. The same author (p. 745) says: *Πρῶτος ἐμονάρχησε Ῥωμαίων Γ. Ι. Καῖσαρ*, i. e. 'Julius Caesar was the *first* monarch of the Romans.'

Josephus and 4 Ezra, then, seem to be quite decisive as to the usual *Jewish* mode of reckoning; and certainly Suetonius and Dio leave no room for doubt, as to the usual mode of reckoning among the Romans, at or near the close of the first century, when special circumstances did not call for another and relative mode, such as we find in Tacitus. And the Chronicon Paschale, Syncellus, and Nicephorus, show plainly that the mode of Suetonius was general and long continued. That a different mode is possible, and even that it was sometimes practised when particular circumstances demanded it, I would admit; but, with such an exception, the usual and general method is plain and fairly incontrovertible. Of course I feel obliged to adopt the opinion, that *Nero is reckoned in the Apocalypse as the* SIXTH *emperor;* and consequently, that *he was living when Rev.* 17: 9, 10 *was written.*

In respect to the exegesis of the Apocalypse, consequences of a somewhat serious nature are dependent on this question. For example, *throughout the whole book nothing is plainer, than that persecution was going on, in an active, urgent, and threatening manner, when the book was written.* The palpable design of the writer is, to guard Christians, who were in such a state and exposed to the temptations resulting from it, against defection and apostasy, and to administer such consolation as they stood peculiarly in need of, in the midst of so many and such aggravated sufferings. If there is any one thing, in regard to the *design* of the Apocalypse, which is plain and incontrovertible, this is the one. And such being the fact, we are obliged to accede to the same mode of reckoning Roman emperors, which is exhibited by Suetonius, Dion Cassius, and Josephus, (not to mention later writers), and of course to suppose that Nero must be reckoned as the *sixth* king, the ὁ εἷς ἐστίν in Rev. 17: 10; for all antiquity are agreed, that *the persecution of Christians ceased on the death of Nero.* Historians have indeed told us of no law passed during Nero's reign, which led to the active and general persecution of Christians; nor of the repeal of any statute after his death, which caused the persecution to cease. The matter, in these respects, is left in some obscurity. But if the reader will consult Vol. I. § 13, p. 222 seq., he will find a special examination of this topic. It is easy to see, that Nero, as the Executive of the Roman empire, could persecute Christians, if he chose to do so, under the guise of insisting upon the rights of the old *religio licita;* or he could attack them as alleged conspirators against the welfare of the State. There is not much probability that there was any law enjoining persecution, which was sanctioned by the Senate; and hence we hear of no *repeal* of any such law after Nero's death. What he did as the Executive, was left undone by his successor; and persecution immediately ceased everywhere, for, as Tacitus testifies, it had become odious to the mass of the people.

How and *why* the persecution of Christians became *general* in the Roman empire, during the time of Nero, has already been discussed in Vol. I. § 13 as above quoted, and these topics need not be repeated here. I cannot but feel, that the evidence on this point is such, when all its various particulars are brought together and compared, as ought to satisfy the candid and inquiring mind; and that we may say, with Ewald, in respect to it: "Quo jure dubitemus, non apparet."

I have now laid before the reader my reasons for believing that Nero was the *sixth* king adverted to in Rev. 17: 10; first from the general usage, (certainly so among the Jews, and mostly so elsewhere), of beginning to reckon with Julius Ceasar; and secondly, from the circumstance that persecution was then raging when the Apocalypse was writ-

ten, as the book everywhere shows. I feel bound, however, to notice some objections raised against this view of the subject, which have not yet been considered.

These are drawn from some expressions in the Apocalypse itself, which are of such a nature, that they have been urged against the position that Nero is the *sixth* king, and was *living* when John wrote Rev. 17: 10. The *beast*, which in chap. xiii, and even in a part of chap. xvii, appears to be a *generic* symbol, i. e. the symbol of a succession of pagan kings or emperors, is occasionally *individualized* in chap. xvii, and made the symbol merely of the then reigning emperor; comp. 17: 8, 11. Of this latter kind of beast, a symbol of the great persecutor of the church, it is said in Rev. 17: 8, ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι. Again in v. 9, ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι, καὶ πάρεσται; which is repeated again in v. 11, with the addition, that "he shall be an *eighth* [king]." These passages, it has been and will be said, assume the fact that Nero was already dead. But I do not understand them so. They assume, it is true, the death of Nero; but they assume it on the same ground that the great body of prophecy in the O. Testament assumes the existence of occurrences disclosed or predicted. Every critical reader knows well, that the Hebrew prophets, everywhere and with great frequency, employ even the *Praeterite* tense, when predicting *future* occurrences. The reason is, that this designates the *certainty* of those occurrences. We need only to read the Apocalypse, in order to be satisfied, that a similar method of prediction is followed in it. For example, let the reader consult chap. 14: 8, and many other passages of the same tenor, where he will see *future* occurrences described as things which had already happened. So in the case before us. What was certain in the writer's mind, and what was speedily to take place, is indicated as already brought to pass, ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι. How can any one, who understands well the nature of the Present tense, as being often employed to express what is *future* and *certain*, be persuaded that any argument can be raised out of these forms of expression, to prove that Nero was already dead? See N. Test. Gramm. § 136. 1. *c*.

That the writer of the Apocalypse refers to the provinces and to their prefects or secondary kings as joining with the beast, i. e. with Nero, in his persecution, and as aiding him to carry it on until the divine purposes are accomplished, seems to my mind to be plainly disclosed in Rev. 17: 11—18. The hatred of the imperial city on the part of the tributary kings, i. e. their *political* hatred on the ground of their subjection, and specially the malignity of the beast itself, toward the great city, (for they are said to *burn it with fire*), seem to be disclosed in Rev. 17: 16; and the manner of the expression appears to make a tacit reference to Nero's burning of Rome, and thus to disclose

who the *beast* is that has been brought to the seer's view. But a mere hint is all which can be given here, in regard to these particulars.

One circumstance alluded to in chap. 13: 10, appears particularly to indicate that Nero was still living when the Apocalypse was written. In the midst of the description of the blasphemies of the beast, and of his "making war upon the saints," the writer breaks out by calling upon his fellow Christians to mark well what he is going to say: *Εἴ τις ἔχει οὖς, ἀκουσάτω* (v. 9). He then predicts, most graphically, the destruction of Nero, i. e. the beast: "If any one sendeth away into exile, he goeth away into exile; if any one slayeth with the sword, he must be slain with the sword;" i. e. Nero, who sends me and other Christians into exile, shall himself become an exile; Nero, who destroys with the sword, shall be destroyed with the same. How exactly this was fulfilled, every one knows who is acquainted with the manner of Nero's death. I am aware, indeed, that this passage would not lose its meaning, in case we should suppose that Nero's exile and death had already taken place. But then we should be met with another insuperable difficulty, which is, that the actual persecution, (going on vigorously when the Apocalypse was written, as the whole tenor of the book demonstrates), would be altogether incongruous with the supposition in question. We know that *persecution ceased immediately on the death of Nero.* It had already become odious to the Roman people; and Galba, on his accession to the throne, would naturally wish to undo what Nero had been doing against the popular will. At first the mass of the Roman people do not seem to have remonstrated against the persecution of Christians; but sympathy with their sufferings, as well as hatred of Nero, brought them back to the natural feelings of humanity; see Tac. Annal. XV. 44.

The internal state of the Apocalypse, then, conspires with the modes of reckoning by historians as developed above, in establishing the position, that Nero was the *sixth* king or emperor referred to in Rev. 17: 10. This fact being admitted, the time when the Apocalypse was written seems to be almost definitely determined. But besides this circumstance, which is not unimportant, another highly important consequence follows, viz., that the book should be explained in accordance with such a view of historical facts. Indeed, on any other ground the difficulty of interpretation is insuperable. The present and active urgency of persecution is everywhere a part of the substratum of the Apocalypse; and if the composition of the book be put off to the time of Galba, this ground vanishes. As to referring the book to the time of Domitian, I take it for granted that this is now out of question.

One who is strongly bent upon defending the opinion that Nero was dead when the book was written, might indeed aver that John wrote it

before the news of the tyrant's death had reached him, and before persecution in the provinces had ceased. This, it must be conceded, was possible; but is it probable? How rapidly the news of Nero's death—a consummation devoutly wished by the whole empire—was spread abroad from Rome, may be judged of by the following circumstances. Galba commenced his reign on the 9th of June, and the prefect at Alexandria in Egypt, on the 6th of the following July, issued an edict there acknowledging Galba as emperor; see Rhein. Musaeum für Philol. etc., von Niebuhr und Brandis, Band II. p. 68. Lücke, Einleit. p. 253. Considering the respective distance of Alexandria and Ephesus from Rome, and the comparative importance of the latter, we may well assume, that the news of Nero's death reached Ephesus in less than half the interval of time just specified. Christians would convey it forthwith to the exile at Patmos; and they could accomplish such a conveyance in a few hours. While, then, the supposition that we are now examining is neither absurd nor impossible, it is, on the whole, quite improbable; particularly so, if the writer of the Apocalypse be regarded as inspired, and thus as possessing an adequate knowledge of the things which he had undertaken to describe. The tenor of his book, as has already been repeatedly said, shows that he wrote *ingruenti persecutione.*

If the statements which have now been made are rendered probable, and still more if they are even well supported, then some preparation of no small importance is made for the more intelligible interpretation of the book before us.

EXCURSUS IV.

On the number of the beast, as mentioned in Rev. 13: 18.

It is certainly a matter of some interest to know how this passage was understood in the early ages of Christianity; and it so happens, that our curiosity, in this particular case, can in some measure be gratified. Irenaeus (Lib. V. c. 29, 30, contra Haereses) has given us at some length his views respecting it. I subjoin a brief account of them.

In chap. xix, he mentions 666 as being, in his opinion, the proper reading of the number. The reason which he appears to assign for this, is singular enough. It was in the 600th year of Noah that the flood destroyed the earth, on account of the peculiar wickedness of its inhabitants. Afterwards, in aid of idolatry, Nebuchadnezzar set up a golden image on the plain of Dura, which was sixty cubits high and

six cubits broad. Put these three numbers together, and we have 666; a representation or symbol of the extreme, and as it were, aggravated wickedness of Antichrist, whose name is concealed in the mysterious 666; for in him is all the wickedness of the antediluvians (destroyed in the 600th year of Noah) conjoined with all the wickedness of idolatry under Nebuchadnezzar, the most potent and impious of all idolaters. Moreover, he says that witnesses personally acquainted with John, testify in favour of this reading.

For these reasons this father thinks it a duty to adhere to the reading 666, which (he also says) was found in the older and more accurate Codices of his time, instead of admitting another reading, viz. 616, which he allows was followed by some. To the reasons already named, moreover, he now (c. 30) adds others. "There are in 666," says he, "as many tens as hundreds, and as many hundreds as units;" i. e. there are *six* hundreds, *six* tens in sixty, and *six* units in six; showing, as he goes on to intimate, by this uniform adherence to *six*, that the apostasy which is to come under Antichrist, will be a repetition of that which took place before the flood, in middle ages, and in after times.

Having thus made his defence of the reading 666, he now goes on to say (c. 30), that he had much rather maintain the fulfilment of the prophecy, than mention the name which is indicated by 666. One reason he gives for this, is, that there are many names which indicate 666; and since this is the case, how can we help seeing, that some uncertainty must attend our efforts at conjecture? He then proceeds to mention several names; (1) *ΕΥΑΝΘΑΣ*, respecting which he ventures no remarks, and which, of course, must have been destitute of any probability, as the matter appeared to his mind. (2) *ΛΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ*, which he thinks quite probable, inasmuch as this is the name of the latest empire, [i. e. the Roman]. But (3) He thinks that of all the names current among Christians of his time, *ΤΕΙΤΑΝ* proffers the fairest claims for admission. His principal reasons are, that this name itself has *six* letters; that it has two syllables both consisting of three letters; that the name too is old, and is not in common use. Besides, it belonged to one of the giants who assaulted the gods; and may therefore well characterize Antichrist when he shall come.

Still Irenaeus says, that he shall not venture on determining absolutely what name is meant, inasmuch as John would himself have disclosed it, had he wished it to be made public at that time. After this he proceeds to describe the reign of Antichrist when he shall come, and says other things respecting the millennial reign of Christ and the saints, which are not apposite to our present purpose.

To this small collection of names by Irenaeus, may be now added others that were occasionally introduced by other ancient writers. Thus

Primasius conjectures the Greek word *ΑΡΝΟΥΜΕ* (as he writes it), i. e. *thou hast denied me;* Arethas (Comm. in Rev. 13: 18) suggests *Λαμιέτις*, also *ὁ νικήτης*, with *κακὸς ὁδηγός*, *ἀληθὴς βλαβερός*, *πάλαι βάσκανος*, *ἀμνὸς ἄδικος*; Ticonius (as cited by Primasius) has *ἄντεμος*; and Rupertus has *Γενσηρικός*, i. e. Genseric, a king of the Vandals and the great scourge of Italy.

The learned Feuardentius, one of the leading editors of Irenaeus, in his note on the subject before us, says, that he ventures to add the conjecture of a learned and most acute judge, meaning J. Offhusius in his *Dial. Dubitant.* This conjecture is, (to use his own words), that "the manifold and horrid schism introduced by Luther, will appear to all such as have revolved the subject *altâ mente*, to answer in all its characteristics to the apostle's description of the beast in the Apocalypse. The primary name of Luther, [i. e. *Martinus Lauterus*, as he states it], makes out the number of the beast, being reckoned according to the laws of the Greek alphabet;" and therefore the learned author sees no good reason, why this number may not be applied to the so called *Reformer.*

In the sequel, however, this editor does the justice to other renowned men of his church to mention, that they have conjectured the word *Maometis*, or *Moamitis* (as Euthymius, Zonaras, and Cedrenus write it), i. e. Mohammed, the name intended by the apostle; for the numerical value of its letters = 666.

But to come down to some later attempts to make out the number and name in question; Wetstein thinks that 616 is the more probable reading of our text, and he finds the name of *Titus*, the Roman emperor, designated by it; which, however, he is compelled to write *Τειτα*, in order to make out the requisite computation.

Herder, who makes everything in the Apocalypse to point to the destruction of the Jews, finds the name that corresponds to 666 in Simon Gorionides, whose crimes are related by Josephus, Bell. Jud. VI. VII. To accomplish this he prefixes the initial of Rabbi (ר) to his proper name thus שמעון ר; which makes up the desired number.

Grotius and some others refer the number to Ulpius Trajan, the emperor, a persecutor, as they represent him, of Christians; but in order to make this out, they are obliged to write the name in Greek, *Ουλπιος*, i. e. *Ulpiust;* which is but a sorry method of accomplishing the end in view.

Others have conjectured *Ἀποστάτης*, [Julian the apostate]; others *Βενεδικτός*, [pope Benedict IX.]; Bossuet makes it DIoCLes aUgUstUs, i. e. Diocletian. Lewis XIV, who persecuted the Huguenots, was called by many Protestants LUDoVICUs, because out of this name they made 666.

So late as 1815, a book was published in Germany, in which the writer proposed to bring Napoleon Bonaparte within the meaning of 666, whose name he writes *Να Βουοναπαρτε*, or *Λατεινος*, or *Και—ρ* [*Καισαρ*] *Παρισιδι*; or (if we may go to the Hebrew language for a solution) it may be expressed thus: כָּרְשִׂכָנוֹשׂ, the Corsican.

John Albert Bengel, the renowned critical editor of the N. Testament, and in high repute both for piety and learning, refers 666 to the number of *years* during which the beast was to exercise his power, and not to any name significant of person or dynasty.

In 1813, Gensler published a work in German, called *The Apocalyptic Secret in Rev.* 13: 18 *revealed*, in which, following in the steps of Bengel, he endeavors to show, that 666 refers to some *era* named after some celebrated man or men, *ἀριθμὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν*. Accordingly he adopts the *aera Seleucidarum*, i. e. commencing with the reign of Seleucus, one of Alexander's generals who reigned over Syria, which era was extensively used in hither Asia. This commenced 311 B. C., to which if you add 355 so as to make up the number 666, you will come to the year in which Julian the Apostate was proclaimed emperor, who might well be called the *Beast* and *Antichrist* by John, and the *Wicked One* by Paul.

Sed — manum de tabula. Enough of these idle conjectures, of which one might almost say: *Pudet has nugas.* The inventor, so far as I have been able to discover, of the exegesis which refers 666 to the *time* or *era* of the beast, was pope Innocent III, who, in an address to all Christendom exciting them to another crusade, adduces the consideration, that the close of the 666 years assigned to the beast, i. e. to the Mahommedan power, was near, and therefore there was scarcely room for a doubt, that God was about to free the Holy Land from the dominion of the Turks. Bengel, however, applied the era made out from 666 in his own way; and while he expresses his surprise that others had not hit upon it, he consoles himself with the pious reflection, that flesh and blood do not attain to knowledge so wonderful, and it is only to the sovereign mercy of the Father of Lights, that so unworthy a servant as he, should be made partaker of such wisdom, hidden from ages and generations. The only thing, he says, that makes him doubt in the least about his views of the Apocalypse, is, that they had been given to one so unworthy as himself.

As to the *era* itself, all that need be now said, is, that according to Bengel's confident reckoning, in view of this, A. D. 1810 was to be the end of the forty-two months of the beast. In 1832 the dragon from the abyss was to begin his reign; within a few days after this the beast with seven heads and ten horns was also to commence his; and in 1836, the beast was to be overcome and destroyed. "Should this year pass

away," says he, "without some remarkable changes taking place, then there must be some radical fault in my system, and one must carefully investigate where it lurks." (As quoted by Lücke, p. 552). But alas for Bengel's toil! The present generation have seen that the changes have not taken place, which were predicted by him.

Let us turn from this historical view, to the inquiry: Whether anything satisfactory can be done to illustrate the number in question, and show its congruity with the design of the writer?

The Greek word *Λατεινος* = *Latinus* of the Romans, seems, at first view, to offer a probable solution. The appositeness of it cannot well be called in question. Whether the adjective in this case is to find its complement in *λαός* = *populus*, or in *αὐτοκράτωρ* = *imperator*, it matters not as to the main design of the writer. Indeed, it might suit the very delicate task he had to perform, if this should not manifestly appear on the face of his writing. He expects it (for so he says) to be interpreted by *σοφία*, and that he only who has *νοῦν* will be able rightly to interpret it. He could not openly name the emperor in this case; for this would have been construed by the magistracy as treasonable. He did not wish to expose the Christians, who read his work and regarded it with reverence and felt a deep interest in it, to the charge of abetting the slander (as it would be named) of the Roman magistracy. They must needs be subject to the powers that then were. Still, as a prophet commissioned by the great Head of the church, John had a work to perform, from which he could not shrink. Christians must in some way be made to understand who was meant by the symbols which the writer employed; else the object of the book itself would be frustrated. How could the writer then, we may ask, select a better way than that which he has chosen? While he probably was understood by the more intelligent part of his original readers, it can hardly be supposed that a Roman magistrate, who was a heathen, would be likely to take offence from the mysterious manner in which Rev. 13: 18 is expressed. He would be more disposed to scoff at it.

As to the form of the Greek word *Λατεινος*, viz. that *ει* is employed for the Latin long I, it is a sufficient vindication of it to cite *Σαβεινος*, *Φαυστεινος*, *Παυλεινος*, *Αντωνεινος*, *Ατειλιος*, *Μετειλιος*, *Παπειριος*, *Ουειβιος* (Vibius), etc. Or we may refer to the custom of the more ancient Latin, as in Plautus, of writing *I* by *ei*; e. g. solitei, Diveis, captivei, preimus, Lateina, etc. And when Heinrichs objects to this (Comm. Exc. p. 246), that Plutarch and other late Greek writers do not employ *ει* but only *ι* in such cases; this proves nothing against the method in question, for the less usual method of orthography would naturally be that, which best comported with the writer's design of partial concealment.

Thus much for the word *Λατεινος*, on the ground that the numeral letters in our text, viz. χξς, are the correct reading, i. e. that 666 was the number meant by the writer. But we have seen, that some ancient copies in the time of Irenaeus read *χις*, i. e. 616. Some of the reasons which Irenaeus gives for rejecting this, are, in part at least, of quite a fanciful nature, and *not* such as should influence our minds in settling the question about the true meaning. But when, among other things, he avers that the older and more accurate Codices read 666, we are at least bound to consider his testimony as of importance, in relation to the criticism of the text. Still, the number 616 would seem to be in itself a good and apposite reading. The Hebrew words קֵיסַר רוֹם, *Caesar of Rome*, as suggested by Ewald, make 616; and that the partial concealment obviously designed by John becomes more effectual, on the supposition that he referred to a *Hebrew* mode of reckoning, and to *Hebrew* words or letters as indicative of his meaning here, seems to be quite plain.

Quite recently, however, Prof. Benary of Berlin has proposed a more ingenious, and to my mind more satisfactory, solution of the *noûs* in question, than any with which I have before met. He regards it as nearly certain, that the letters indicative of the *number* in question must be *Hebrew* letters; although he does not seem to have given a satisfactory reason. The very design, however, of *partial concealment* seems to be, as I have already hinted, a good reason for the adoption of this method by John. A heathen Greek or Roman would not be likely to divine the writer's meaning, in case the latter designed to make the appeal to Hebrew letters or words; while there were everywhere *Jewish* Christians in the churches who could easily unravel it.

Benary remarks, that in the Talmud and other Rabbinical writings the name of Nero, in the form of נֵרוֹן קֵסַר often occurs. This amounts *numerically* to the number of the beast; q. d. 50+200+6+50, and 100+60+200, added together equal 666. Nor is this all. There was another method of writing and pronouncing the name of Nero, approaching nearer to the Roman method. This was נְרוֹ קֵסַר, *Nero Caesar*, which amounts numerically to just 616, and thus gives us a good ground of the diverse reading which Irenaeus found in some Codices. This is surely a remarkable coincidence. The same name, pronounced after the Greek and Hebrew analogy, equals numerically the sum of 666; but spoken in the Latin way, (which is also consonant with the Hebrew apocopate form of נֵרוֹן — viz. נֵרוֹ —), it amounts to 616, which is the rival reading.

Nothing can be more natural and easy, then, than to account in this way for both of the readings in the Codices. The discrepant modes of sounding Nero's name, whether fully in Hebrew, or in an abridged way, gave rise to the different designations of the corresponding numbers.

A solution of the various readings, which is so natural and obvious, one is strongly tempted to believe, must have its foundation in truth and reality.

The main objection to *Λατεινος* is, that it is not sufficiently specific. There is hardly room to doubt, that the writer, notwithstanding the veil he has thrown over his annunciation, means to be specific in this passage. If so, the designation in question would come somewhat short of his purpose. To the solution offered by Ewald this objection does not apply. The then reigning Caesar would be specially intended. But against Ewald's solution, which makes the number 616 necessary, there lies the testimony of Irenaeus, viz. that all the older and better Codices read 666. The solution of Benary removes both objections, and at the same time accounts for the variety in the ancient readings. Is it not, therefore, a highly probable one?

One question remains of some interest: How came John to adopt so *mystical* a method of designating who was meant by the beast; or, if adopted, how could he rationally expect that it would be rightly understood?

Why John chose to avoid speaking out directly and plainly the name of the Roman emperor, has already been considered; and as to the question now before us, it is easily solved, by a reference to the custom of the times when John wrote; a custom continued for a long period after his death. This we may see in the account given of the contents of the Sibylline Oracles, Vol. I. p. 104. There the reader will find ample evidence of a usage like that of John in the text before us, sometimes even in cases where concealment was unnecessary. To the exhibition of the subject there, I must refer the inquirer, in order to save repetition. He will see that John, in the case before us, has done nothing that was unusual, nothing which might not have been expected, in a case of such difficulty and hazard. Can there be any good reason to doubt who was meant by him? At least, did he not expect his more intelligent readers to understand his meaning?

As to the solution of the mystical number by a resort to the *Gematria* of the Hebrews, which has sometimes been attempted, I must, with Ewald, wholly dissent. The tenor of the whole thing is different from that of Gematria.* Nor do I doubt, that this and other like conceits

* That the reader may compare the Gematria with Rev. 13· 18, I will here produce a specimen, which is also referred to by Ewald. In Gen. 49: 10, *Shiloh shall come*, יבא שילה, the numerical value of the sum of the letters = 358; the same is also the numerical value of משיח, *the Messiah; ergo* the Messiah is meant by יבא שילה! Very different is the manner of John. I will only add, that the curious reader will find some peculiar *lusus animi* in the use of letters signifying numbers, in Artemidorus' Oneirocrit. 1, 12. 3, 54. 4, 26.

in the Cabbala of the Rabbins were of *later* origin than the Apocalypse. There is no need of resort to such a source for explanation; for any of the more probable sources already indicated, are more to be relied upon, and answer much better purposes.

EXCURSUS V.

On the designations of Time in the Apocalypse.

No discussions respecting anything which pertains to the Apocalypse have been so animated, or excited so much attention in the English and American churches, as those which respect the several *periods* designated in this book. A great portion of later commentators on the Revelation, who belong to these churches, have first made out a historical sketch of the events, political and ecclesiastical, which they suppose to be foretold, and then applied themselves, with an interest which has often been intense, to searching after the means of deciding when those periods of time *begin*. After accomplishing this, the remainder of their task is of course easy. To find the *end* of the respective periods costs no trouble, in their way of performing this task, excepting a simple arithmetical calculation; for as to the *length* of the periods themselves, they determine it by the very summary process of making *a day* to be the representative of a *year*.

In the English world, this mode of reckoning, in respect to the Apocalypse, became current principally in consequence of the publication of the *Clavis Apocalyptica* of Joseph Mede, in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Counting upon the command given to the prophet Ezekiel (Ezek: 4: 4—6), to reckon *each day* on which he lay upon his left or his right side, as the symbol or representative of *one year's* punishment to be inflicted upon the houses of Israel and Judah; appealing also to Dan. 9: 24, where *seventy weeks* seem to be reckoned as meaning *weeks of years* = 490 years; Mede and most of his followers seem scarcely to have pursued the inquiry, whether the same principle of reckoning could be justly applied to the Apocalypse. They have taken it for granted, at least most expounders in our churches have done so, that the principle of counting a *day* for a *year* is too plain to need special confirmation, or to admit of any reasonable contradiction. My present object, therefore, is to examine, first of all, the justice of such a claim, in as brief a manner as the nature of the case will permit. If it can

be shown, that there is no good ground for admitting such a method of reckoning in the Apocalypse, then we shall at least have made some advances toward attaining to a well-grounded interpretation; inasmuch as one of the main obstacles to it will have been removed. When so much is done, we must then understand and interpret the designations of time in their usual and literal sense, or else (in case this cannot be done) consider the numbers employed as having merely a *symbolic* import, i. e. as intended to designate various but indefinite portions of time, larger or smaller according to the nature of the case and of the numbers employed.

I may remark, first of all, that I know not why one solitary case, viz. that in Ezek. iv, or at most only two, if we reckon Dan. 9: 24 among this class, should be appealed to with so much confidence, as establishing a rule for the interpretation of *all* prophecy where *time* is specified. In Gen. 6: 3, God announces, in the way of prediction, that the days of men shall be 120 years, before the flood comes upon them. The rule in question, i. e. one day for a year, would make a respite for the antediluvians of 43,200 years; so that their disregard to Noah's threats of a flood would be no very strange matter. So in Gen. 7: 4, God declares that, after seven days, he will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights. Did any one ever dream of making this the same as saying, that after seven *years* it shall begin to rain, and shall continue to do so for forty successive *years?* In Gen. 15: 13 it is predicted, that Abraham's posterity shall be bondsmen in Egypt, 400 years. Does this then mean 144,000 years? Gen. 41: 1 seq. predicts seven years of plenty and seven of famine to Egypt; can this mean 2520 years of each? In Num. 14: 33 it is declared, that Israel shall wander in the wilderness forty years, before they reach the promised land; and are these wanderings to last 14,400 years? Or does not actual history settle the question what forty years in this case mean? So in Ezek. 29: 11, 12, there is a threat of forty years' wasting to the Egyptians; in Jonah 3: 4 it is declared, that Nineveh shall be overthrown in forty days; in Is. 7: 8 it is said, that Ephraim shall be broken within threescore and five years; in Is. 16: 14, that the glory of Moab shall be contemned within three years; in Jer. 25: 11. 29: 10, that the Jews shall be exiles in the land of Babylon for seventy years; and did any one ever think, in these respective cases, of any other than the literal and obvious sense of the words which designate the respective periods? Many other instances of the like nature, from various parts of the Scriptures, might easily be added; but these surely are sufficient to show what common usage is, with respect to the declarations of the prophets. If any one doubts still, then let him interpret Dan. 4: 32 in accordance with the principle of *a day for a year.* According to this,

Nebuchadnezzar must have been mad and eat grass 2520 years—discipline enough to humble a king even as insolent as he.

But are there no exceptions to this common usage in prophetic declarations? There ought to be many, and to be very plain ones, in order to justify us in making one day to stand for a year, in the designations of time in the Apocalypse. Yet I venture to assert, that not a single example of a similar method of interpretation can be found, which in any important respect will serve as a justification of such an exegesis.

The usual reference to Ezek. iv. as a ground of justification, is surely wide of the mark. There the prophet is commanded to lie on his left side 390 days, in order to bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. i. e. in order to present a symbol of the punishment which they shall receive, and of the length of time during which it shall be administered; for, it is expressly said to him; "I have appointed to thee *each day for a year.*" In like manner he was to lie upon his right side forty days, so as to symbolize the punishment of Judah for forty years; Ezek. 4: 4—6. It matters not for our present purpose, whether these symbolic actions were things to be actually performed by the prophet, or whether they are only represented as being done, (for in either case they would answer the same end for substance); what we are now concerned with, is only *the designation of time.* Nothing can be plainer, than that *days* are here made the representatives of years from the necessity of the case; for how could the prophet lie upon his left side 390 *years?* Then, in the next place, the fact that days are to be symbols of years, is *expressly stated* at the outset; and plainly it is so stated, because otherwise it would not enter into the mind of either prophet or people, that days could be regarded as the representatives of years.

Another case, bearing some resemblance to this, is also appealed to in the way of justifying the interpretation now under examination. It is presented in Num. xiv. Moses sent spies to the land of Canaan, who were absent forty days, and then returned and made a bad report of the land. The consequence was discontent and rebellion in the camp of Israel. With this God was displeased, and he declared that the Israelites should wander forty years in the desert, each year corresponding to one of the forty days in question; Num. 14: 33, 34. In this case then, just as in the preceding, there is an *express* mention and appointment, that *days* should correspond with *years;* so that the case is open to no mistake and no misunderstanding. But let us suppose that God had simply said, that the Israelites should wander in the wilderness for *forty days*, and said nothing more; would any one have ever conjectured that *forty years* were meant? Surely not; and yet this last case is the only one that can be compared with the designations of time, in general, in the prophetic books of the Scriptures.

By any circumstances, now, like to those in the case of Ezekiel and of the spies, the predictions in the Apocalypse are wholly unattended. Not an intimation is once even hinted, that such a rule of reckoning time is to be applied. How can we then be justified in applying such a rule, when no necessity of the case, and no analogy, illustrates or defends such an application?

But we shall doubtless be reminded of an analogous case in Dan. 9: 24, (to which alone Mede appeals), where, it is alleged, *seventy weeks* certainly mean *seventy weeks of years*, i. e. 490 years. But here again a critical examination will lead us to see that the appeal is not well grounded. The original word here is not שָׁבֻעוֹת *weeks*, but שָׁבְעִים *sevens*, or (to adopt the Greek idiom) *heptades*. The passage of course runs thus: "Seventy heptades are determined for thy people," etc. *Heptades* of what? The natural and indeed necessary answer is: *Heptades of years;* for the context tells us, that Daniel had just been meditating on the question, whether the seventy *years'* exile of the Jews was now at an end; and the angel, who now makes further disclosures to him, tells him that *seventy heptades* are still further designated for the people of Israel, in which various important events are to be accomplished. That the word *years* would of course be naturally and readily supplied after *heptades*, in such a case, is clearly established by the fact, that the common mode of reckoning time is by *years;* and moreover by the fact, that where the writer of the book of Daniel does not mean that *years* shall be understood, he feels himself obliged actually to supply another and an appropriate word, so as to prevent any mistake. Thus in Daniel 10: 2, 3, we find the words שְׁלֹשָׁה שָׁבֻעִים twice employed, where the writer intends to designate *three sevens of days*, and the consequence is that he in each case inserts the word יָמִים (*days*) after the word *sevens* or *heptades*. In no other way could he guard against the mistake of *being understood to mean heptades of years*.

The amount now of all this is, that a writer in Hebrew might say, and did say, seventy *sevens*, in respect to time, and be understood obviously to mean, that seventy times seven, i. e. 490, years were of course intended to be designated. But how widely diverse is all this from saying *three years and six months*, and being understood as meaning 1260 years! There is no palpable analogy between the two cases. Of course, any reference to Dan. 9: 24, is wholly foreign to the matter of justifying the exegesis which is now under consideration.

Nothing daunted however by the failure of these cases, many appeal, with unwavering confidence, to other instances in Daniel, where a period equal to *three years and six months* is repeatedly named by the writer; which period they interpret as meaning 1260 years. These passages are in Dan. 7: 25. 12: 7; but in both cases the expression of the

original is, *time, times, and half* [time], in Chaldee עִדָּן (7: 25), in Heb. מוֹעֵד (12: 7). Each of these words means a *set, definite, designated time;* and of course the only natural exegesis of them is grounded on the supposition, that a *year* is that definite time which is intended by the words respectively. So far all is plain.

But then, the interpretation which makes out these designations of three and a half years to mean 1260 *years*—is that equally plain? Far enough from this. In 7: 25, it seems to me beyond all reasonable question, that Antiochus Epiphanes is designated as the person into whose hands the temple and all its appurtenances are to fall, and who will carry on a most bitter and bloody persecution against the Jews as a nation, but particularly against all of them who are devoted to the peculiar duties of their religion. Facts show that this prediction, as understood in the usual sense of the words, was in all respects verified. In the year 168 A. C., in the month of May, Antiochus, on his way to make an attack upon Egypt, detached Apollonius, one of his military officers, with 22,000 men, to subdue and plunder Jerusalem. This was accomplished. A horrible slaughter was made of the men, and the women and children were made captives, and multitudes of them sold as slaves. The Jews were soon compelled to eat swine's flesh, and to sacrifice to idols. In December of that same year, the temple was profaned by introducing the statue of Jupiter Olympius, and on the 25th of that month, sacrifices were made to this idol upon the altar of God. Just three years after this, i. e. in 165 A. C. Dec. 25th, the temple was expurgated by Judas Maccabaeus, and the worship of Jehovah restored. Thus *three years and six months*, if not to a day, yet very nearly so, marked the period of desolations in the holy city and temple, as predicted by Daniel.*

Now as it seems quite plain, that Antiochus Epiphanes is described in Dan. 7: 25, and of course that the *time, and times and the dividing* [half] *of time* is applied to the period of the desolations in Jerusalem occasioned by him, by what process of interpretation shall we make out 1260 years of aggression upon the holy city and temple by one man? Methusaleh himself comes far short of living through such a period. This one consideration seems to make an end of the question, whether *days* stand for *years* in Dan. 7: 25.

That Dan. 12: 7, designating the same period, refers to the same per-

* In accordance with this is the declaration of Josephus, Prooem. ad Bell. Jud. § 7. Bell. Jud. I. 1. § 1. In Antiq. XII. 7. § 6, however, he names *three years* as the period of the desolation. But this evidently refers to the special dishonour done to the temple by the heathen sacrifices there, and it accords exactly with fact in respect to these. The reader may consult Usher's *Annals*, A. C. 168 et seq.; also Froelich, *Annales Regum Syriae*, under Antiochus Epiph. Comp. Jahn's Heb. Commonwealth on the same period, and also Prideaux's Connection, Vol. III.

son and the same events, there can, as it seems to my mind, be no good reason for doubt on the part of any one who thoroughly compares Dan. 11: 21—45 with chap. 12: 1—7. Of course it is impossible, that 1260 years should be made out as the period designated here. How can it be applied to limit the desolations made by one man, viz. the Syrian tyrant?

I am aware of the attempt to escape from this, by finding a *ὑπόνοια* in these passages, and making them secretly descriptive of *antichrist* under the Christian dispensation. But without appealing to the incongruity of a *double* sense of these passages, it is enough to remark, that all which is predicated of the tyrant, in Dan. 7: 24—26. 8: 9—12, 23—25. [Probably 9: 26, 27?]. 11: 21—45. 12: 7, was to take place *before* the introduction of the Messiah's reign. How then could it apply to some distant centuries *after* this reign had commenced? How, moreover, can a *time, times, and half a time*, mean *literally* three years and six months, as surely it does in respect to Antiochus, and yet at the same time mean 1260 years when applied to antichrist? No justification, then, can be made out for interpreting the Apocalypse as designating the period of 1260 years when it speaks of three years and six months, from the fact that the like period is designated in the book of Daniel.

Nor do the other periods here designated afford any justification to the interpretations given of the periods in the Apocalypse. In Dan. 8: 13, 14, a period of 2300 days is mentioned, as the limit to which the desolations in Judaea shall come. Judas Maccabaeus restored the temple worship, Dec. 25, A. C. 165. Now if we count back for six years, four months, and twenty days = 2300 days, (counting thirty days to a month and twelve months to a year, which is plainly the prophetic usage), we shall of course find 171 A. C., and some time in that year during the month of August, to be the *terminus a quo* of the 2300 days. In that very year the temple was plundered, through the urgency of Antiochus for the tribute promised to him by the high-priest, Menelaus. It was moreover profaned, in such a way as to occasion an insurrection among the Jews, who slew the deputy of the high-priest and all concerned in the sacrilege. From that time, there were frequent aggressions made upon the temple and holy city, particularly for the last $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of Antiochus' reign, until final victory perched upon the standard of Judas Maccabaeus, in Dec. 165 A. C.

Now as Dan. 8: 9—13 (comp. 8: 22—25), makes it plain that *Antiochus* is the person to whom the 2300 days stand related, so it is certain (as before) that these cannot mean 2300 *years*. How could Antiochus in person oppress the Jews for two thousand and three hundred *years*? Events in the life and reign of Antiochus make it quite unnecessary, as

it would seem, to look after any other than a literal interpretation of the days which are specified in Dan. 8: 14.

Should any one ask, why the time in Dan. 7: 25 and 12: 7 is limited to 3½ years, and in 8: 14 extended to six years and 140 days, one answer may be found in the fact, that the latter term is apparently designed to comprehend the whole period, from the time when the first serious attack was made upon the worship and the rights of the Jews, through the direct aggression of Antiochus Epiphanes; but the 3½ years designate the period during which he held the absolute and exclusive control of the temple and of the holy city, and committed every kind of cruelty and abomination. Before this, the vexations were only occasional; but still they were exceedingly obnoxious to the feelings of the pious Jews.

In Dan. 12: 11 is another designation of time, which at first view seems incompatible with the limitation already noted in Dan. 7: 25 and 12: 7. The latter, in both passages, is 3½ years; but the former is 1290 days, i. e. just thirty days more than the other two designations. How can this be accounted for? The events to which the 1290 days stand related, are evidently the same for substance as those to which the 1260 days stand related; for Dan. 12: 11 plainly shows this.

The answer to this question is, as I apprehend, to be found in the fact, that 3½ years is a number equalling the one half of *seven*, the sacred number, and that this is a convenient designation of a moderate length of time, whether the designation is quite exact, or falls a little short of exactness, or exceeds it in a small measure. In this simple light we may regard the 1260 days in Dan. 7: 25. 12: 7; while the 1290 days, in Dan. 12: 11, gives an exact period to a day, in which the events there described took place. It were easy to illustrate the mode of reckoning by 3½, by references to extensive usage of this nature. Thus the drought in the time of Elijah is said to he during three years and six months, James 5: 17, although no period is named in the O. Testament. Thus the Rabbins in respect to other events: "Nabuzaradan was sent to lay waste Jerusalem 3½ years," Eccha IV. 12. "Vespasian besieged Jerusalem three years and six months," Eccha, I. 5. "Hadrian besieged Bither 3½ years," Eccha R. II. 2. "Nebuchadnezzar and Vespasian will be punished in Gehenna three years and six months," Eccha I. 12. Nothing is plainer, now, than that this period is used here in the general way above described, without pretensions to exactness in regard to a day. The 1290 days, however, in Dan. 12: 11, appear to be designed for the purpose of exactness. And so far as we can make out the doings of Antiochus from history, this corresponds well with them. In the year 169 A. C. Antiochus made war upon the Egyptians. This war was not finished. He withdrew his troops to winter quarters in Syria, and in the Spring of the year 168 renewed his

attack. Now if we count back three years and seven months = 1290 days, from the time when Judas Maccabaeus purified the temple and renewed the sacrifices, (i. e. from Dec. 25, A. C. 165), we shall find that the month of May in A. C. 168 would be the time when Apollonius took possession of Jerusalem and committed shocking cruelties there. As it appears that this diversion of Apollonius, with a detachment of troops, was made when Antiochus was on his way to renew his attack upon Egypt, and as this was of course in the Spring of the year, all seems to be plain and harmonious.

One period more remains in the book of Daniel, viz. the 1335 days in Dan. 12: 12. But I apprehend this passage is not very difficult of explanation. We have seen that on the 25th of Dec. A. C. 165, Judas Maccabaeus cleansed the temple and renewed its service. Very early in the year following, Antiochus marched beyond the Euphrates, and coming to Persepolis he undertook to rifle the temple there of its treasures. But the inhabitants rose *en masse* and drove him from the city with disgrace. Thence he fled to Ecbatana; and there the news came to him of Judas' great victory in Palestine and the restoration of temple worship. Uttering the most horrid blasphemies and imprecations, he set out immediately on his return to Syria, that he might prepare to annihilate the Jewish nation. On his way he fell sick, and died, probably of cholera, at Tabas in the mountainous region to the northward. All this was early in the Spring of 164 A. C. Now if we add to Dec. 25th A. C. 165, the time of 75 days (which is the excess of the 1335 days over the 1260), we shall find ourselves to have arrived near the middle of March A. C. 164.

How perfectly now all these designations of time tally with historic facts, may be seen at a single glance. "Blessed," says the angel, "is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days!" That is: 'Blessed is he who liveth to see the day, when the tyrant and oppressor of God's people, who has profaned the sanctuary, blasphemed the God of Israel, and shed the blood of priests and saints, shall be removed beyond the grasp of persecuting power, and sacred liberty and law shall resume their sway over the promised land!' All is so natural and easy here, that one can scarcely help acceding to an interpretation of this nature, when it is once proposed.

Where then, in the book of Daniel, can we find any *analogon* for the justification of the 1260 *years'* exegesis in the Apocalypse? I cannot find it; and I must think that those who do find it, *interpret it into the prophet*, instead of deducing it exegetically out of him. We seek in vain to establish by the Old Testament a precedent for making a *day* the representative of a *year*. Ezek. iv. and Num. xiv. are the only cases where this is done; and there, as we have already seen, the reasons for

so doing are perfectly apparent; and there, too, we are expressly admonished how the reckoning is to be made. Does not this amount to a declaration, that unless we had been so informed, we should of course reckon time as it is elsewhere reckoned? And inasmuch as in other cases no notice of such a kind is given, what can we do consistently, except to reckon in the manner which is usual throughout the Scriptures?

Come we now to the APOCALYPSE, the direct and immediate object of our inquiry. I shall select only those designations of time here, which are made by the use of *numbers*. On some of these I need not dwell; for all will concede that the use of numbers in some of the cases must be of a tropical or symbolical nature.

In Rev. 2: 10 it is said to the church at Smyrna, that "the devil would cast some of them into prison, that they might be tried and afflicted, for *ten days*." That a short and really undefined period of time is meant here, hardly any have questioned. Such or the like use of *ten* the reader may find in 1 Sam. 25: 38. Neh. 5: 18. Jer. 42: 7. Dan. 1: 12, 14. Acts 25: 6 al. The mind naturally prefers some definite period of time, as being more emphatic; and so *ten days* stands for a short, but really indefinite, period. So the Latins, when they wished to express an indefinite number of times during which anything happened or would happen, said *sexcenties*, i. e. six hundred times. But in the case before us much narrower limits are designated.

In Rev. 3: 10, *hour of trial* plainly means season of trial; for the word ὥρα is very commonly employed in this way, by the New Testament writers. Of course the very nature of the expression leaves the period of time here undefined.

In regard to the *five months*, Rev. 9: 10, during which the *locusts* have power to inflict wounds upon men like those of scorpions, it seems obvious, that the usual period, viz. from May until near the close of September, in which the natural locusts commit ravages, is here chosen in order to carry on the similitude. That a moderate, but actually undefined period of time is here intended, would seem to be plain. If, with those who reckon a day for a year, we should here count upon 150 years as the period of duration, we must be at an utter loss to find anything in history that corresponds with any good degree of probability to such a period. If we count only five *literal* months, we are still involved in the like difficulty. Hence the tropical or symbolical use of the expression, five months, seems to be most probable and facile. And such appears to be the more usual opinion of commentators.

The designations of time, however, which are to be found in chap. xi—xiii, are those about which controversy has arisen, and, with the exception of the *millennial* period, are the only ones to which any special interest is attached. These need, therefore, an attentive examination.

In Rev. 11: 2 it is predicted, that the *holy city* and the temple (outer court) shall be given to the Gentiles, and that *they shall tread it under foot forty-two months.* That Jerusalem is here meant, seems to be beyond any fair question, inasmuch as v. 8 specifies it as *the city where our Lord was crucified.* But the epithet *holy city* of itself determines the question beyond appeal. Now here the same period is designated, as in respect to the ravages of Antiochus Epiphanes, in Dan. 7: 25. 12: 7. And as we have seen, in the latter case, that not 1260 but 1290 (Dan. 12: 11) is probably the *exact* period of time, while the three and a half years is used in the way of a more general expression, as being the one half of seven, so here we may understand the expression forty-two *months* in the like manner. As a matter of fact, Cestius Gallus laid siege to Jerusalem, in the month of Oct. A. D. 66; but he continued it only a short time, Joseph. Bell. Jud. II. 19. It was not until the spring of the following year, that Vespasian, sent by Nero to subdue Palestine, commenced hostile action in that country. There can scarcely be a doubt, therefore, that the period in question is designed to mark the time during which the conquest of Palestine and of the holy city was going on. On the 10th of August A. D. 70, Jerusalem was taken and destroyed by Titus. How well, now, this period compares with that when ravages were committed by Antiochus, scarcely needs to be noted here.

During the period while these events are going on, i. e. during 1260 days, Rev. 11: 3, the two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, and finally suffer martyrdom. That the two events, viz. the invasion and destruction of the holy city and the testimony of the witnesses are cotemporaneous, is plain from the fact, that they are not only conjoined in the description, but that both *immediately precede* the fall of Jerusalem; as chap. xi. fully shows. Matt. 24: 9—13 also shows, that the persecution of Christians would be active at this period. We seek then for no other limitation of the time here, than the same which has already been pointed out in the preceding verse, i. e. in Rev. 11: 2.

Let it be noted here, also, in the way of illustrating the number $3\frac{1}{2}$, that the corpses of the two witnesses, after they are slain, are said to lie in the street, exposed to public gaze, for *three days and a half,* Rev. 11: 9, 11. What now, if we should insist on interpreting this as meaning $3\frac{1}{2}$ *years?* It would bring out an absurdity; for a single month, in the climate of Palestine, would, in one way or another, destroy any dead body, not to speak of its being devoured. Three days and a half, in such a case, can therefore only mean *a short period,* i. e. one within which the dead bodies should not be dissolved or consumed; and the reason for choosing this number is plainly to be found in the context, where $3\frac{1}{2}$ years are so often designated.

In chap. xii. there is a new and different application of the same number. The woman adorned with the sun and stars (the representative of the church), after the ascension and glorification of her Son (the Messiah), 12: 5, is compelled to flee to the wilderness, and *dwell there* 1260 *days*. There she is nourished *for a time and times and half a time*, 12: 14, until the period of destruction is overpast. What now is this, but a symbol of Christians who retreated to Pella in the wilderness-country, when the invasion of Judea commenced, and of their being protected there until the indignation was overpassed? This synchronizes, therefore, with the period already named and defined above. I see no good reason to doubt, that it comprehends or refers to the same period.

It was thus the church in general escaped from the desolations of war and persecution. But Satan, enraged at this, is represented as making his attack in other quarters, upon "the remnant of the seed of woman," i. e. upon Christians in various parts of the Roman empire, 11: 17. The beast which rises out of the sea, i. e. the imperial power of Rome, is represented by John as "making war with the saints for forty-two months," Rev. 13: 5, 7. The persecution by Nero began about the middle or the latter part of Nov. A. D. 64, at Rome. It ended with the death of Nero, which was on the 9th of June, A. D. 68, for on that day Galba entered Rome and was proclaimed emperor. Here again is $3\frac{1}{2}$ years or 1260 days with sufficient exactness; for the precise time of forty-two months expires about the middle or end of May, and Nero died in the first part of June; see Comm. on Rev. 13: 5, and also the remarks on 13: 3.

With *facts* such as these before us, how can we doubt what interpretation ought to be put upon the *times* thus designated in these respective passages? Had these facts been duly examined, and all party-bias been relinquished when men came to the study of the Apocalypse, it would seem impossible that any of the more current speculations concerning these periods could ever have originated. It is a sound rule of interpretation, that the plain and obvious meaning of a passage is to be followed whenever it will make a good and apposite sense, and not give an impossible, absurd, or unmeaning sense. And in the cases before us, the plain and obvious sense of the periods named is the only one which accords at all with the context. It is impossible that we should renounce the plain and obvious meaning, then, without a fundamental violation of the principles of exegesis. Had the writer designed to put *days* for *years*, he must without fail have given us information of it. He could not expect to be read and understood, in any other manner than in a natural and easy one. The periods designated mean, therefore, what they plainly seem to mean; and it is an unwarrantable proceeding, when any

other interpretation is given to them. In particular, I am not able to see how the *terminus a quo*, can be ascertained, provided we fix upon 1260 years as the length of the period meant to be designated, and then insist upon it that *popery* is symbolized by the *beast* described in the Apocalypse. The transactions and occurrences of A. D. 603, or 615, so far as these have regard to the Romish church, are not of a distinctive and important nature enough to mark with certainty the *terminus a quo*. Every one who is in a good degree familiar with the history of the third, fourth, and fifth centuries of the church, knows that *popery* took its rise from small beginnings, and that its growth was very slow and gradual; so that any one definite and specific period can hardly be fixed upon for any occurrence which made it substantially what it is. Indeed, it did not reach its full height until the Council of Trent was held, and its creed and policy established by it. Even admitting, then, that chap. xiii. seq. has relation to the Romish church, how can we establish, with any tolerable degree of certainty, an exact time for the beginning of the *terminus a quo?* The *end* of such a period it would indeed be easy to determine, could we once find out its proper beginning. But there is one advantage which the patrons of such an interpretation have hitherto enjoyed, and which has shielded them in some measure from criticism. This is, that the *terminus ad quem*, or end of the period, has hitherto, for the most part, been proposed by them as a period still *future*. We are bid to wait until that future arrives, and then we may see who is in the right respecting the beast of the Apocalypse. John Albert Bengel, indeed, the most learned, pious, and perhaps consistent of all this class of interpreters, fixed, as we know, upon A. D. 1836 as the year of the grand catastrophes disclosed in the second part of the Revelation. He entertained not even the shadow of a doubt that he was in the right; nay, he verily believed, that his interpretation was given to him by the special grace of God and the peculiar illumination of the Holy Spirit. Yet that year has passed away, without any important changes in the aspects of the world or of the church. And so have other periods fixed upon with the like or even greater confidence, already passed by, without affording us any signs that the great period of 1260 years is at an end.

Most of the hariolations, now rife in this country and in Europe, elude the grasp of criticism by going into the *future* for a *terminus ad quem;* for who can positively contradict a declaration, that such or such an occurrence, which is a possible thing, will happen at such or such a definite future period? England and America swarm with books of this class, all founded on the assumption, that Apoc. xiii. seq., respects *papal*, and not pagan, Rome. This is not the place to examine in detail such a method of interpretation. I must remit the reader to the

Commentary, and particularly to the statements of the contents of the Apocalypse, prefixed to various sections of the book, and to Vol. I. § 27. I would merely remark here, that chap. xvii, the design of which is to show who is meant by the beast, etc., gives us not a single intimation that would of itself lead us to think of *Christian* instead of Pagan Rome. It is a beast which was *then* existing, *then* devastating the church and threatening to destroy it, that is obviously set forth in Rev. xiii. seq. But if this be not enough to show the unfounded nature of the *papal* exegesis, i. e. of the exegesis which regards the beast in Rev. xiii. and xvii. as the symbol of the *pope* and *popery*, let one other circumstance be brought into view. In Rev. 17: 10, the seven heads of the beast are said to symbolize *seven kings;* the angel-interpreter then adds: "*Five of these are fallen;* one is; the other has not yet come, and when he shall have come, he will continue but a short time." Now who in all the world can make out, that of *popery*, which arose near the close of the sixth century, it could be said in A. D. 68, that *five popes* had already fallen, one was then reigning, and the seventh when he should appear would continue but a little time!! What a tissue of downright anachronisms, absurdities, and monstrosities in exegesis, does this favorite *papal* application of Rev. xiii. and xvii. lead to and involve! How can any considerate, consistent, and candid interpreter shut his eyes against all this, for the sake of carrying out his favorite argument against the *papacy?* With regard to the question: In what sense is the papacy predicted or denounced in the Apocalypse? I have more than once expressed my views, in the preceding pages; see above p. 267 seq. I need not repeat again what has already been said. But the supposition that John designed originally and clearly to symbolize *papal* Rome by the beast from the sea, is one of the most chimerical of all the chimeras that party exegesis has exhibited.

We come next to the period of a *thousand years*, designated in Rev. 20: 4 seq. Is this to be literally understood, or must we make out of it, as many have done, a period of 360,000 years? Or may it be taken in a generic way, as the designation of a very long period?

Analogy would perhaps decide in favour of the *literal* construction. Yet the word *thousand* is so often employed in a general way, for a long or very long period, that one might be justified, perhaps, in doubting here the absolutely literal construction. A few examples from the Scriptures will suffice to illustrate my position; e. g. "The Lord . . . make you a thousand times as many as you are.—God who keepeth covenant to a thousand generations.—How should one chase a thousand.—The word he commanded to a thousand generations.—He cannot answer him one of a thousand.—If there be an interpreter, one of a thousand.—The cattle on a thousand hills are mine.—A day in thy

courts is better than a thousand.—A thousand shall fall at thy side. —Though he live a thousand years twice told.—One man among a thousand have I found.—Where were a thousand vines, at a thousand silverlings.—One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one.—A little one shall become a thousand.—The city that went out by a thousand.—One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

In view of such and so numerous examples of the word *thousand* indefinitely employed, some doubt may naturally arise in the mind of an interpreter, whether this same word is, or is not, so employed in the passage before us. With absolute certainty the question cannot be determined by us. That the period of the church's prosperity will be at least 1000 years, seems to be certain. That the time may not be longer than such an exact period, can hardly be made out by any exegetical process. Analogy, as to the use of the word *thousand*, would plead in favour of this; but the definite or nearly definite periods elsewhere designated in the Apocalypse, as we have already seen, would plead in favour of the simple literal interpretation.

As to the period of 360,000 years, i. e. counting each day of the thousand years for a year, I had almost said that I hope it is correctly made out. Yet I know of nothing which will justify this method of reckoning. If the writer had designed to be understood in this manner, would he not have given us at least some intimation of it?

I am aware of the disappointment which some will feel, in view of such results as have been stated; for some evidently have favourite schemes of interpretation, by which they make out from the Apocalypse the destiny of the Romish church, and of the Mohammedan power, and it may be, of other enemies of the true church. It would be superfluous for me to repeat here what I have elsewhere said in relation to this mode of interpretation. It is impossible, with such views as I entertain, to regard the Apocalypse as a *syllabus* of civil and ecclesiastical history. It was written for the consolation of Christians under a raging persecution, and its main design is to disclose relief from the evils which then pressed upon the church. The distant future is indeed recognized in it. Yet how *brief* is the recognition! The future events of long periods, and events too of inexpressible interest, are all crowded into the compass of one short chapter (ch. xx.); thus showing that the pressure of the times then passing was the *main* object which the writer had in view. Of course, if this position be correct, all the calculations about the beginning and ending of the 1260 years, and the exact time of the commencement of the 1000 years, are without any solid basis, and are not entitled to our credence.

Are these views, now, contrary to the spirit and tenor of the N. Tes-

tament? Does that bid us to expect, that definite periods of events in the *distant future* will be revealed to us? The Saviour did not tell his anxious disciples, who inquired with eager curiosity: *When* shall these things be? either the day or the hour when Jerusalem should be destroyed. Nay he went so far as to declare, that neither man, nor angel, no, not even the Son himself, knew that day; Mark 13: 4, 32. Even after his resurrection, and just before the ascension of Jesus, when his followers renewed the anxious inquiry: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" his reply was: "IT IS NOT FOR YOU TO KNOW THE TIMES, OR THE SEASONS, WHICH THE FATHER HATH PUT IN HIS OWN POWER." Acts. 1: 6, 7.

One is often constrained to ask, when he reads or hears the confident calculations of many, in respect to *the time of restoring the kingdom*: What? Has the Saviour's solemn and parting declaration been revoked? Is it true, after all, that we may know the exact year, if not the very month or day, when the kingdom of God shall come in full power? Did John indeed obtain more knowledge of this than Jesus himself was willing to communicate, and more than he judged it proper for his disciples to know? We would not deny, that definite periods have at times been assigned to the existence of temporal and temporary evils. In the Apocalypse itself, spiritual Sodom and mystical Babylon are limited to a definite period, as to the persecutions which they would carry on against the church, and were carrying on when the Apocalypse was written. But this is a case wholly unlike to that which is presented, when it is asked: At what definite period will the millennium begin? That *the Father has kept this in his own power*, I doubt not. How then can we listen to those hariolations which assure us, that this period is well ascertained at present, and that too by men who are altogether uninspired? How many confident vaticinations of this nature have already been wrecked! How many and bitter disappointments are others yet to experience, who put their confidence in them! Enough for us to know, that *the Lord is not slack concerning his promise*, and that *he who shall come, will come, and will not tarry.* Even so; Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

EXCURSUS VI.

Rev. XX. 3. *Καὶ ἔβαλεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον, καὶ ἔκλεισε καὶ ἐσφράγισεν ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ, ἵνα μὴ πλανήσῃ ἔτι τὰ ἔθνη, ἄχρι τελεσθῇ τὰ χίλια ἔτη· καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα δεῖ αὐτὸν λυθῆναι μικρὸν χρόνον.*

Every one must see, that one of the most important words in the investigation of this passage is *ἔζησαν*. We may briefly recapitulate the illustration of it, in this place. It cannot mean simply *to live;* for to construe it thus, would be to deny the life of the soul after the death of the body. When the Saviour gives promise to the penitent thief, that he should, that day on which he expired, be with him in *Paradise;* when the same Saviour appealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as being *alive*, and thus disproved the doctrine of the Sadducees; and when Paul says, that 'to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord,' it cannot be consistent with the doctrines of Christianity to suppose that our spirits die with our bodies. Above all, the writer of the Apocalypse himself, as is remarked in the Commentary, assumes a position adverse to this, when he presents, as he does oftentimes and everywhere in his book, the spirits of the just as uniting in the worship and in the halleluias of heaven. In the very passage before us, the seer beheld the *ψευχάς* of the martyrs apparently in heaven; and in conjunction with this he sees the approaching *ἀνάζωσις*, (if I may coin an expressive word for the occasion),—*ἀνάζωσις* of their bodies, and beholds, in prospect, their continued reign after this *ἀνάζωσις*, for a 1000 years. *Ἔζησαν*, therefore, cannot mean merely to recover a psychological existence which was lost. It cannot mean *to live spiritually*, i. e. in opposition to being dead in trespasses and sins; for all the saints and martyrs possess such a life from the time when they are first regenerated or sanctified. It cannot mean *to become immortal;* for from the first moment of their existence as rational beings, they and all the rest of the human race were immortal. It cannot mean merely, that, at the time when the Millennium commences, they *begin to be happy*, i. e. to enjoy life; for those who die in the Lord are blessed *ἄπαρτι*, i. e. immediately or without delay. Whatever *ἔζησαν* means here, it must from the nature of the case be something different from that which can be predicted of the rest of men (*οἱ λοιποί*), whether these are Christians of the lower rank, or the wicked in general, or both. It must import, moreover, a *striking change* in their antecedent condition; for less than this the language cannot imply, without stripping it

of all special significancy. *Happy*, in a high degree, they were before the Millennium; and therefore ἔζησαν can mean here nothing less than a great augmentation of happiness, provided the word refers merely to the subject of happiness. But is there not good reason to believe that it cannot well be made to refer merely to this? We must admit, it is true, that the prosperity of the church is a subject of joy to all the redeemed in heaven, inasmuch as we know that angels rejoice over even one sinner who is brought to repentance here on earth. And that there will be a general joy and a great augmentation of happiness among the redeemed in heaven, on account of the millennial state of the church, is an idea that we cannot well refrain from entertaining, whether it is specially developed in the Scriptures or not. Is it probable, then, that ἔζησαν here means merely such an augmentation of happiness? How are the martyrs to be peculiarly distinguished from other Christians, if such be the meaning? Their exalted piety may indeed give them a more lively joy than that which is felt by others; but this merely, if there be nothing more, would not correspond well to the greatness of the change from their antecedent condition, which seems to be plainly indicated by the whole passage before us.

If then, as it would seem, we must reject all these meanings, how can we well avoid coming to the conclusion, that ἔζησαν here must mean *reviving* or *rising from the dead?* The use of ζάω elsewhere in the Apocalypse shows very plainly, that it may mean *revived, lived again*, in reference to the body which had been dead. Thus the Saviour speaks of himself, in Rev. 2: 8, as being he who had been *dead*, καὶ ἔ ζ η σ ε, *and had revived, lived again*, after the death of the body. Thus too it is said of the beast (Rev. 13: 14), which had the deadly wound of the sword, that ἔζησε, *it revived*. Thus in our context also it is said: "The rest of the dead *lived not*, οὐκ ἔζησαν." Surely the writer does not mean that Christians of lower rank, or the wicked, have no existence at all after the death of the body.

The point of antithesis which seems to decide the whole case, is, as is remarked in the Commentary, the distinction between the *first* resurrection and the *second*. It appears to be a distinction of *order* or *succession*, but not of kind. There is indeed one other particular of difference or contrast, viz. the second resurrection will be *general, universal*, comprising both the righteous and the wicked, while the first will comprehend, as the writer's language seems to intimate, only saints and martyrs who have been specially faithful unto death. This distinction the writer has made prominent. He expressly assures us, that the *other* dead would not be raised when the 1000 years should commence, but only at the end of the world when *all* will be raised. The express contrast here made between the partial and the general resurrection, and

the manner in which this contrast is presented, show that the design is not to compare a *spiritual* with a *physical* resurrection, but to contrast the partial extent of the latter at the beginning of the Millennium, with its general or universal extent at the end of the world.

Putting now all these considerations together, I do not see how we can, on the ground of exegesis, fairly avoid the conclusion, that John has taught, in the passage before us, that *there will be a resurrection of the martyr-saints, at the commencement of the period after Satan shall have been shut up in the dungeon of the great abyss.*

A thousand difficulties, as I am well aware, will start up at once in the minds of many, and we shall be thrust at on every side with urgent questions, earnestly asked, and asked moreover with confident anticipation that they cannot be answered. It becomes necessary, in order to satisfy (if it can be done) the mind of the anxious and candid inquirer, to take some special notice of the most urgent difficulties, which are of such a nature as has been intimated.

(1) Vitringa's principal objection to such an interpretation as I have given above, is drawn from the alleged fact, that the word of God reveals *one*, and *but one*, resurrection, both of the just and the unjust.

This he takes so much for granted, that he does not even go into any disquisition respecting the subject, (p. 861). This has also been taken for granted by many others; some of whom have argued against the Johannean origin of the Apocalypse, because of this singular doctrine of a *first* resurrection; and others have affirmed, as Vitringa also does, that we are by no means to admit such a doctrine, on the doubtful ground or meaning of a single passage.

Doubtful, however, philologically considered, I think we cannot well name it. I have already given reasons why we seem to be constrained to admit the sense of a *bodily* resurrection, like to the last and final one. The exigencies of the passage are apparently such as absolutely to demand this; at least a great portion of recent commentators have judged them to be such. Indeed, if this be not a position in the interpretation of Scripture which is fully and fairly made out by philology, I should confess myself at a loss to designate one which is, from among the many difficult passages of the Scriptures.

Were it as Vitringa states the matter, i. e. *doubtful* whether philology can maintain the position which I have taken, then I freely grant, that the reasoning of this author, viz. that we are not to introduce a doctrine into Christian theology which depends on the *doubtful* construction of any one text of Scripture, and seems to be discrepant from the general tenor of the Bible, would be quite conclusive. But in the case before us, I cannot admit any serious doubt, either on the ground of general philology, or of the *usus loquendi* of the Apocalypse. Moreover, it is

not at all certain, at least to my mind, that the doctrine of a *first*, as well as a second, resurrection is not elsewhere alluded to in the Scriptures.

But I will now suppose, merely for the sake of argument, that it is not. Does it then follow, that we are not to admit it from the passage before us?

Why should it, in case this passage is plain, and fairly incontrovertible, as to its meaning philologically investigated? That it is so, I am on the whole constrained to believe. Vitringa himself does not elsewhere reason in such a way as he does here, in respect to other passages of the New Testament. He does not call in question the doctrine, that the mediatorial kingdom of Christ will be given up, "when the end cometh;" nor does he doubt that Christ, i. e. "the Son himself, will be *subject* to Him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15: 24—28), because these doctrines are taught but *once* in the Scriptures. He does not call in question the doctrine that "saints shall judge the world, and judge angels," because no scriptural writer, except Paul, has presented this doctrine in such a shape. He does not call in question the resurrection of the body, under such modifications as Paul has taught, in 1 Cor. xv, although no other part of the Bible presents us with these. Yet these are doctrines of high and sacred import, not lightly to be received, and certainly not to be rejected lightly. Why then, if the meaning of the text before us is clear, should we reject the doctrine of a *first* resurrection, even if no other scriptural writer has expressly taught it? There is nothing more improbable in this resurrection, as considered in and by itself, than there is in the *second* resurrection. The difficulties are the same in all important respects; and these difficulties all depend on speculative views which limit the power of God, or prescribe the order of his kingdom in heaven; or on difficulties arising from speculations respecting the nature and properties of matter, or concerning personal identity, or existence in a spiritual world, or other like things. If there be anything of this kind, which may be arrayed in opposition to a *first* resurrection, so it may in opposition to a *second*. These objections, then, plainly prove too much; of course, they can prove nothing to the present purpose.

But I have another suggestion to make here, which must contribute to present the subject in an attitude very different from that in which Vitringa presents it. It seems to me, that the passage before us is *not* the only one in the Scriptures which teaches or intimates, that there will be a *first* and a *second* resurrection. I need not discuss this subject again here. I refer the reader to Phil. 3: 8—11. Luke 14: 14. Is. 26: 19. 1 Cor. 15: 23, 24. 1 Thess. 4: 16. In particular does Paul seem, by his ἀπαρχή . . . ἔπειτα . . . εἶτα, in 1 Cor. 15: 23, 24, to have advert-

ed to a first and second resurrection. See De Wette in loc. On the subject of such resurrections, see Vol. I. § 10. p. 176 seq. of this work, and the Comm. on Rev. 20: 4, 5.

(2) It is objected to a *first* resurrection, that it is accompanied with no *judgment*, and therefore is wholly unlike the second in this respect. How, it is asked, can we suppose the saints and martyrs to enter upon an exalted state of glorification, before they have been brought to trial and to judgment?

The answer seems not to be difficult. Is it not a doctrine of the Scriptures, that the saints, immediately after death, do pass to a state of glory? It is; and yet there is no *general* judgment connected with this. By calculation as to the number of deaths which now take place in the world, it is certain that at least one person dies about every second of time. Such being the fact, a formal trial, understanding the word *more humano*, of each individual before the bar of God, is out of the question. The decisions of Omniscience need no protracted time for examination. Each spirit takes the place, of course, to which its character necessarily assigns it; and all this, as we must suppose, without any general or even any particular and formal judgment, after the manner of human tribunals.

This being admitted, why should it be objected to a *first* resurrection, that it is accompanied with no formal judgment? The great Lord of the church surely knows the character of all his servants just as well without any such trial, as with one. The first resurrection is represented in the Apocalypse as a *blessedness of a peculiar nature*, and the saints and martyrs, who have been faithful unto death, are admitted to the privilege of enjoying it. "Blessed and holy is he, who hath a part in the first resurrection; over such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years," Rev. 20: 6. These saints, then, it would seem, are to anticipate the final judgment day, and enter on that higher state of happiness which results from the union of the soul with the body, when it is raised from the dead and made like to Christ's glorious body—enter on it long before the world comes to an end. In other words: Peculiar sufferings and fidelity are entitled to, and will receive, peculiar rewards.

That these, however, with all other intelligent, rational, accountable beings, will appear among the congregated host at the final judgment, is still not to be doubted. But their state will not be changed by that judgment. It will be only to justify the ways of God in the view of all the rational beings, who have been formed by his power, and made accountable to the moral laws of his kingdom.

I have said thus much, on the ground of conceding to the objector what he alleges, in respect to bestowing reward without any trial or

judgment. But if the reader will now consult the Commentary on the passage, he will find some good reason, (at least it appears so to me), to doubt whether the martyrs are admitted to their state of exaltation without any trial or judgment. The tribunals, as we are told, are set, and the judges are seated upon them; and as to the martyrs, a decision seems to be implied, that a resurrection and an exalted station shall be assigned to them; and all this actually takes place. This seems to be comprised within the meaning of the text, when it is carefully investigated. Of course, if this be the case, the objection has no scriptural basis on the ground alleged.

If it be objected, that 'the writer seems to represent the judgment here as *preceding* the resurrection, and so as not to be analogous to the final judgment;' the answer is obvious. The writer classes things together which are predicated of the same subjects, and does not relate them merely in the order of sequency. And even if this be denied, the circumstance that the judgment precedes the resurrection, is altogether unimportant as to the main object of the representation. There is still a judgment, before the higher reward is bestowed.

(3) 'Must we then go back to the old doctrine of Papias, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Nepos the Egyptian bishop with his friend Coracion, Lactantius, and other visionaries of ancient and modern times, and interpret all the prophecies in relation to the Millennium *literally*? Must we maintain that a thousand years of carnal feasting and luxury are set before the church, during which the King of Zion will literally descend to the earth, and reign in glory upon the holy mountain at Jerusalem, and all nations go up and worship there, and all sin and suffering and sorrow cease, and the earth be converted into another Eden, substantially like that from which Adam was expelled?'

Such, with regret I acknowledge it, have been the phantasies of many lively imaginations, even of not a few persons otherwise grave and sober, buoyed up by dreamy hopes respecting the future. From the records of even the most early times we have evidence, that such enthusiastic visions were indulged. But of all this I find nothing in the text before us. Not a word of Christ's descent to the earth, at the beginning of the Millennium. Nothing of the literal assembling of the Jews in Palestine; nothing of the Messiah's temporal reign on *earth*; nothing of the overflowing abundance of worldly peace and plenty. We find, indeed, most lively images of the like nature in Isaiah, and in other prophets; but how can we doubt that this imagery has a tropical meaning, when we are told, for example, that "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and the little child shall lead them; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the

asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den?" Is. 11: 6—8. Does any rational man indeed expect, that beasts of prey and poisonous serpents will undergo an entire change of nature in the Millennium, and that there will be no more sin nor suffering nor sorrow during that period? This is to ask: Whether he expects that the probation and the imperfections of man in the present world are entirely to cease, so that there shall then be no need of a Christian ministry, nor of the preaching of the Gospel? Is the depraved disposition of men to exist no more, when this happy period arrives, and is there to be no further need of the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, and of repentance and reformation? Idle, yea, worse than idle, are all the fancy-dreams about such a world in expectancy as this. They have done great mischief in the church, even at an early period; nor have they ceased to do it still; but of all these phantasies the author of the Apocalypse is quite guiltless.

Where were the *thrones* which John saw? Plainly where the *souls* were who were to be judged. And where is that? In chap. 6: 9 we are told where it is. It is in *heaven*. The souls of the martyrs are there represented as at the foot of the altar, in the temple of God in heaven. And where, throughout the Apocalypse, are the souls of departed saints supposed to be? Surely with God and Christ in heaven. But here, in the passage before us, no change of place where the souls of martyrs are, is intimated. The writer tells us, that they are to reign *with Christ* for a thousand years. But Christ is not represented as having changed or transferred his place of abode. Occasionally he is represented as making his appearance at the head of the armies of almighty God, as a resistless conqueror. But his *abode* is in *heaven*, upon the throne. In heaven, then, *μετὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, are martyrs and saints to live and reign, during the millennial period. There indeed their *spirits* were, before this period commenced; but now a new state or condition is brought to view. It is a union of their spirits with their bodies raised from the dead. In this *advanced* state of happiness, they are to be enthroned *with Christ*, i. e. they are to be where he dwells, and where, as the Scriptures often teach us, he will continue to dwell, until he shall make his descent at the final judgment-day. (See 1 Thess. 4: 16. 2 Thess. 1: 7. Acts 1: 11. 3: 21, which last text many apply to the Millennium, but to this exegesis I cannot accede). Why then should our author be taxed with the dreams and phantasies of ancient or modern Millenarians in the literal sense, who make a worldly and sensual kingdom, and bend all things in the Scriptures to the support of such a scheme? There appears to be no solid ground for this; certainly none expressed in our text. Martyrs are to be kings and priests, not of Christ only, during the millennial period, but of God also. Is God then

to be personally and visibly resident on earth, and are they to serve him in this condition, as the priests of old served in the tabernacle and temple of the Hebrews? This question, at least, needs no discussion. Why then should the other? Will you say: 'Because Christ and the saints who are raised from the dead have *bodies*, therefore they must have a local earthly habitation? If so, then I would remind you, that the dead are raised "incorruptible," this "mortal puts on immortality," the body "is raised in glory," it "is raised in power," it "is raised a *spiritual* body." How then can a *material* world be fitted for its abode? How, in the nature of things, can the *glorified* saints physically associate with those who have never yet undergone the change of death and a resurrection? In a word: How can earth become heaven, and saints once there glorified be honoured and made more happy by a descent to a world of sin and sorrow, or at all events to a world in which corporeal and material beings dwell? for such it will always be, so long as it is a world of *probation*; and such a world it must be even during the Millennium. But John is responsible for none of these phantasies. The view which *he* gives, presents nothing improbable; certainly nothing impossible, or incongruous with the nature of things, as elsewhere represented in the Scriptures. But,

(4) I shall doubtless be asked: What can the reign for a thousand years with Christ mean? Can it be, that after this period the saints and martyrs will cease to live and reign, as kings and priests? If this reign has respect only to their heavenly state, must not this mode of presenting the subject imply, that after the period in question (the thousand years), there will be a diminution of their happiness and glory?

At first view, the difficulty thus suggested seems to be specious. Further consideration however, may clearly diminish, if not entirely remove it. The reign in question, as here presented, is most evidently a *relative* one. It stands related here to the state or condition of the church on earth. When Christ has overcome the beast and false prophet, his kingdom will be extended over most of the earth, and of course be very widely extended. As God, indeed, or the divine Logos, he lives and reigns over all forever and ever. But as *Mediator*, his peculiar reign is coëxtensive with his dominion as connected with the church. So long as he suffers the powers of darkness to exercise their dominion, his power or dominion as Mediator is not fully developed. But when this development shall be made, in the millennial day, then the saints are to rejoice in it, and to participate with him in the joy and glory arising from it. And such is their triumph and joy, as presented in the passage before us. It is a *relative* reign; it is their participation in the Redeemer's triumphs; for he is the Head, and they are

"members of his body." When that dominion is again invaded by the congregated hosts of Gog and Magog, urged on by Satan once more loosed from his prison, then it is, that this relative and (as we may say) temporal dominion is again thwarted, and brought into a new state of trial and danger. It seems, as it were, to suffer an interruption. Beyond the period when the new enemy is to be subdued and destroyed, the Apocalyptist has not made particular disclosures. But the implication of course is, that when the enemies of the church's peace and prosperity are destroyed, then the peace and prosperity of the church will return and be reëstablished. The reign of the saints and martyrs, then, will be resumed, and will continue until the end of all things. It will go on after the consummation of all things; for they will be "kings and priests of our God *forever and ever.*" Yet the object of the passage before us is not to disclose this last view of the subject; for *all* the redeemed will participate in these final honours. It is merely to disclose to Christians the great truth, that the martyrs, or the faithful who will have lived before the millennial period, will enjoy the peculiar privilege of a *first* resurrection as a reward of their fidelity, and will be advanced to an elevated state of glory at the commencement of that period. That this elevated state will end, at the close of that period, except in the modified manner already stated, there is no reason to suppose. The dominion of Christ as Mediator is to be given up, (so Paul tells us), at the consummation of all things; for after that, there is nothing more to be done by him in the official capacity of a Mediator. But Christ's glorified human nature is not to be annihilated, nor his *moral* dominion over the Redeemed to cease, so long as heaven and happiness endure.

So in the case before us; because the apostle tells us, that the martyrs *begin* their glorious triumph with the millennial period, it does not follow that it is to *end* with that period. It is only its *relative* condition which is to be changed, when a new enemy comes in upon the church. But still, the *final* triumph of the church is certain; and the reign of the saints, as kings and priests of God, is to be forever and ever.

Thus have I discussed the most important questions, which are raised by way of objection to the interpretation which has been given to the passage before us. I might stop here, and leave to the reader of the book other and minor difficulties, which not unnaturally arise in the minds of some respecting the subject before us. But it may not be amiss, in order to satisfy the minds of some who are perplexed with the passage under examination, to consider a few other questions which may be raised.

It is asked: 'Whether *all* true Christians, and indeed *all truly pious*

men of every age, who lived before the commencement of the Millennium, will be raised from the dead at that period, or whether the Apocalyptist affirms this only of *Christian martyrs*?

To this I answer briefly, that those "who are beheaded for the testimony of Jesus," are clearly placed in high relief, by the writer of the Apocalypse; but possibly he does not limit the promises merely to these. He may mean to include *all who have not received the mark of the beast*, nor done him homage, i. e. all who amid sufferings have been faithful and true to the doctrines and duties of a divine religion, in times of pressure. We cannot well doubt that he has specially in view the *persecuted* Christians of his day; but still, may he not be regarded as designating *two classes* of persons? Can he mean to be understood as confining his views only to literal and actual martyrs? And if faithful Christians in general are described by his language, then what forbids, that *all* of these before the Millennium, who have cherished the same spirit as the actual martyrs, served the same God, and possessed the same sympathies in respect to the prosperity and welfare of the church, should be included in the promises which he here holds out?

The answer to these questions is not very easy, and cannot, as it seems to my mind, be made out with entire certainty from the text. The natural impression from reading the text plainly is, that martyrs who have been steadfast during persecution by the beast and false prophet, and maintained in the midst of sufferings their integrity throughout, will be partakers of the first resurrection. But then, what enlightened interpreter will not concede, that the particular representations and symbols exhibited in the Apocalypse, are designed to teach and establish general truths? Is it not true, that "Christ will reign, until *all* enemies shall be put under his feet," all of whatever kind, whether they are pagan Rome or any other pagan country, whether Islamism or false Christianity? I believe this to be assuredly true; and that the *principles* established by the Apocalypse are intended to cover this *whole* ground, notwithstanding the symbols and representations are specific and particular. In accordance then with such a principle I shall doubtless be asked: 'Why may we not hope, that *all* the faithful martyrs and confessors of every age, previous to the Millennium, will participate in the glories and honours of that blessed day?'

The answer, as it seems to me, must on the whole be, that some shades of doubt remain here. Is there not a *distinction* made by John, between those who have perilled their lives and suffered for their steadfast adherence to religion, and those who have been distinguished neither by active piety nor by suffering?—Who will venture to answer with confident assurance, that there is not? The special object, in view of which the Apocalypse was written, seems to point us to the class of

martyrs and faithful confessors, as being the only ones intended to be included by the writer. In times of distressing and bloody persecution was the book written. Christians were to be consoled, and fortified so as to meet the shock. What now was the natural course for the writer to take? Was it not to hold out *high* and *peculiar* rewards to those who endured to the end? It is difficult not to think this probable. And what is the peculiar reward of unshaken constancy and fidelity? *A part in the first resurrection.* This is the natural and obvious solution of the case. But what then of other pious men of every age, who have borne no conspicuous part in martyrdom or suffering, and made no peculiar attainments in piety? Are they to wait the common lot of other Christians, who may live after the Millennium has commenced, and be raised up only at the last day? I do not feel that this question can be answered with entire confidence. On the one hand, to affirm that *all* the pious, who have lived before the Millennium, will be raised up at the beginning of that period, would seem to abolish all distinction between faithful confessors, who are martyrs, and other Christians who hold an inferior place; and thus to remove special excitement to steadfast adherence to Christianity amid sufferings and death. On the other hand, however, it will be said, that we seem, by the distinction in question, to mingle the pious of humbler degree with the wicked, who are a portion, if not all, of the *οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν νεκρῶν* that have no part in the first resurrection. We are reduced then to a kind of strait here, between these two considerations; nor does there appear to be anything so entirely explicit in our text, as completely to relieve us from this strait. Enough, since we know assuredly, that faithful saints and martyrs, in times of persecution and deep distress, have a glorious reward placed before them, of which they will not be deprived. The fearful and timid and wavering and cold and slothful Christian—why should he be encouraged by the same prospect and the same promises, which are placed before martyrs and faithful confessors? Even if the abounding and wonderful mercy of God should, in the end, give him part in the first resurrection, it does not seem to be meet, nor consistent with proper excitement to elevated piety, to hold out the same promises and encouragement to the timid and doubting and slothful Christian, as to the faithful and active and diligent one, who counts not his life dear in the cause of Christ, yea, who counts all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.

And does not Paul himself seem to say, that although he might possibly be a Christian, and attain to final happiness, yet he should lose a part in the *first* resurrection, if he should become slothful and remiss? He tells us that he had suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but dung . . . that he might know Christ and the power of his resurrec-

tion . . . *if by any means he might attain to the resurrection of the dead*; Phil. 3: 8—11. Did Paul, then, consider it a matter of doubt whether he should have a part in the *final* resurrection? This same apostle, who has so expressly taught us the resurrection of *all*, both of the righteous and of the wicked—did *he* doubt whether he could attain to this same resurrection? Surely not. Consequently his declaration, then and only then, seems to possess a full and energetic meaning, when we view him as declaring, that a high and holy and vigorous contest with the powers of darkness must be carried on, in order to obtain a part in the *first* resurrection. So interpreted, the meaning of the passage stands out in bold relief.

All this seems rather to guide us to the conclusion, that a distinction will be made among the pious themselves, at the *first* resurrection. This is only carrying out the principle, that those who possess five talents and improve them diligently, will be made rulers over five cities; and those who have two, over only two cities. In other words: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and *their works do follow them*." An emphatic meaning can, on this ground, be naturally assigned to this passage. Yet I do not, and dare not, confidently affirm in a case like this, where all is future, and from its very nature is involved in some obscurity as seen by our feeble vision. One thing is certain—*Just* and *true* are the ways of him who is King of Saints.

It may be asked, moreover: '*In what manner* will this first resurrection take place? With outward and visible demonstrations; or only by a secret and unobservable exertion of divine power?'

In regard to this it may be said, first, that there is nothing in the text of our author which would go to show, that there will be any extraordinary outward and *visible* demonstration made by the Saviour and attending angels, at the period in question. Different is the passage, in its tenor, from that in 1 Thess. 4: 16, where the apostle says, that "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a loud shout, and with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God," i. e. with the sound of the trumpet of God, as on Sinai of old. This declaration of Paul plainly has respect to the *final* resurrection, when "those who are alive shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so be ever with the Lord." But nothing of this kind, in either of these respects, is said in the passage before us. May we not conclude, then, that John did not mean to designate a resurrection *apparent* to all the dwellers on earth, or apparent to the fleshly eye, but one which, although not outwardly seen by men, and unattended with any pomp or outward and visible tokens, will in reality take place, in order that martyrs and faithful saints may as it were anticipate their final state of glory, and

enjoy the triumphs of the church, in the splendour and excellence with which redeeming love will invest them?

It becomes us not to be over confident in any interpretation of a passage which has respect to future occurrences of a high and mysterious nature. But so far as the laws of interpretation lead us we may go, with a humble but steadfast confidence, that the Saviour has, at all events, promised great and glorious things to saints and martyrs, when the kingdom of the beast and false prophet shall be brought to desolation, and the kingdoms of this world become the domain of our Lord and of his Christ.

In taking leave of the subject of the first resurrection, I would merely suggest a few of the leading thoughts that must guide us, as it seems to me, in making up our final opinion. (1) It is clear that the *usus loquendi* of the New Testament sanctions the assigning to ἔζησαν the meaning of *revived, lived again* after death. (2) At the end of v. 4 it is distinguished from ἐβασίλευσαν κ. τ. λ. The *living* is one thing, the *reigning* is another. If now we give to ἔζησαν the tropical sense of *reigning with Christ*, or of being advanced to an exalted state of glorification, then the two expressions would be tautological; which appears to be inadmissible here. For, (3) The writer immediately contrasts the state of the glorified martyrs with that of *the rest of the dead*, v. 5. He says of the latter, that *they did not live*, i. e. in the sense in which the martyrs did. Now if οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν νεκρῶν includes other saints who are not martyrs, or the wicked, or both, it would be difficult to make out any tolerable meaning, unless we understand ἔζησαν as importing a real resurrection. As to *happiness*, (if we understand ἔζησαν simply to designate this), *other saints* surely do partake of it. And as to the *wicked*, it would be needless to assert here, that they were not happy during the thousand years. In fact, (4) The only *tropical* meaning that can be assigned to ἔζησαν here, which will bear examination at all, is that of exaltation to a high degree of glory and happiness. There is no certain analogy for this shade of meaning in respect to ζάω, elsewhere in the New Testament. I do not deny the possibility of employing the word in this way, nor even the probability, in case other circumstances accorded. But here the *contrast* stands in the way. The martyrs ἔζησαν at the beginning of the thousand years; the rest of dead οὐκ ἔζησαν until those years were completed. Is not the implication here, of necessity, that at some period after this completion the rest of the dead also *lived?* The contrast relates only to the period in question. Beyond that is a *second* resurrection, in which the rest of the dead will live. If this includes *all* the rest of the dead, then, *living* cannot mean *advanced to a high degree of glory and happiness*, for *all* the dead will never attain to this. If the *rest of the dead* means only other saints

who are not martyrs, the difficulty would indeed be diminished, for all will be "kings and priests unto God," after the general resurrection. Is this then the meaning of the writer? And does he mean only to contrast one class of saints here with another? It is a possible sense, I would concede; but is it probable that he so limits the comparison?

There is, I freely confess, so much that is difficult here, that I do not advance my main positions with full and entire confidence. I have ventured upon the path that I have trodden, merely as led by philology, and, as I would hope, in the way of a modest and humble inquirer. I have freely suggested the difficulties which philology throws in the way of the *tropical* meaning often assigned to ἔζησαν here. If they are not insuperable, they are at least very great. My own mind at least is so much influenced by them, that I do not see my way clear to adopt the tropical meaning. I must incline to the other, although with no little diffidence. I can readily cherish respect for those who may differ from me on the points before us; and at all events, they are at liberty to form and maintain their own opinions.

One other question in respect to our subject, and we must then dismiss it: *How* EXTENSIVE *does the passage before us intimate that the millennial reign will be?*

To answer this question, we must look at the plan of the book under examination. Here all is *progressive, climactic.* First, the Jewish persecuting power is subdued, and Palestine is rescued from its grasp. Then follows the subjugation of the Roman empire, in all its extent over what was called the known world. But still, even this does not actually embrace the whole earth. Beyond the boundaries of this empire, and in regions unknown to the ancients, were numerous hordes of barbarous nations, by the Greeks and Romans called *Scythians;* by the people of Middle and Western Asia named *Gog* and *Magog.* These plainly are not included in the *second* great triumph of the church; for after the 1000 years, when Satan is again let loose, he betakes himself to these, and leads them up, *in numbers like the sand of the sea*, against the camp and city of the saints. Whence could such an army come, if the whole world without exception were already Christians? No defection or apostasy from Christianity is intimated by John. Satan goes among the far-distant *heathen*, and excites them once more to war against the saints, Rev. 20: 7—9. So the ancient prophets also predict; as one may see by a careful study and examination of Ezek. 37: 1—39: 24. Joel 3: 1—21. Zech. xiii. xiv. Then comes universal peace and safety to the church. Its setting sun will be in unclouded glory.

How exactly, too, does all this correspond to God's dealings with his church in times past! More than 2000 years pass away before a covenant people are selected; 500 more before a written revelation com-

mences; more than 4000, from the beginning of the world before it is completed; and after 1800 years more, only a small part of the earth is yet *christianized.* How many more will pass before such a portion of the earth is reclaimed from heathenism and error, as will correspond to the extent of the Roman empire as presented in the Apocalypse, is more than we can tell. "The times and seasons hath the Father kept in his own power." But this we know; "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; a 1000 years are with him as one day, and one day as a 1000 years."—"Yet he that shall come, will come and will not tarry." "Amen! Even so; come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

In the Apocalypse, now, analogies to these periods are carried out. All is gradual, progressive, climactic. The final consummation is the new heavens and the new earth, where all is holiness and peace and happiness. God and Christ will dwell with the redeemed; they shall hunger no more, and thirst no more. There shall be no more pain, nor sorrow, nor death, nor sin. The Lord will be their everlasting light, and God their glory. Is not this enough? Can we ask for more to animate our hopes, to cheer us in our sufferings, to sustain us under our sorrows? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart to conceive, of the things which God hath prepared for those who love him."

Finally, it will be perceived, that while, with nearly all of the recent interpreters of the Apocalypse who possess distinguished exegetical talent, I admit a *first* resurrection, I am far removed from the ancient or the modern enthusiastic interpreters, who find in our text a *temporal* and *visible* reign of Christ on earth, in the midst of a church militant and triumphant mingled together in one and the same *terrestrial* abode. To recount the phantasies of these would be a wearisome, and in many respects an unprofitable task. I must content myself with merely translating a single passage from Irenaeus, which will show how early some visionary and extravagant opinions, in relation to a temporal and terrestrial reign, gained a footing even in the primitive church.

In the latter part of Irenaeus' fifth book *Contra Haereses,* he comes to the topic in question. Here he labours, at great length, to show that nearly all the promises of the Old and New Testaments have respect to such a terrestrial reign. In the midst of his arguments, he appeals to what certain presbyters or ancients had related, who, as he says, had seen the apostle John. From him had they heard, as he avers, that Christ himself when speaking of the days of his earthly and visible reign, said to his apostles: "The days will come, in which vines will grow, each having ten thousand branches; and on each branch there will be 10,000 twigs, and on each twig 10,000 clusters of grapes; and

in each cluster 10,000 grapes; and each grape, when expressed, will yield twenty-five *μετρῆται* of wine, [i. e. about 209 gallons]. And when any one of the saints shall take hold of a cluster of grapes, another [cluster] will cry out: I am a better cluster, take me, and on my account give thanks to the Lord." (Iren. Cont. Haer. Lib. V. c. 33.) When this calculation is reduced to a simple result, it makes one grape vine to produce wine to the amount of 180,000 billions of gallons.

Thus far the alleged words of Christ to his disciples. Now follows another passage taken by Irenaeus from a work of Papias (fl. A. D. 100), entitled *Λογίων κυριακῶν Ἐξηγήσεις*. It runs thus: "In like manner a grain of wheat will produce 10,000 heads; and each head will have 10,000 grains; and each grain will yield ten pounds of clear fine flour; and other fruits will yield seeds and herbage in the same proportion. And all the animals which subsist on the productions of the earth, will be peaceful and harmonious, and obedient to man with the most entire subjection." (Ib.)

Irenaeus then adds, that he has taken these things from the work of Papias already named, and subjoins the remark of Papias at the close: "These things are credible to those who have a believing spirit."

Such then were the dreams of enthusiastic minds even at, and soon after, the very close of the apostolic age; dreams ridiculed by Origen himself, by Eusebius, by Dionysius of Alexandria, Jerome, Augustine, and many others; but still, dreams which gained credit with such as could not elevate their minds above the sensible objects around them. When was it, or will it be, properly understood, that Christ's kingdom is not of this world—"is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost?" In comparison with these, all earthly pleasures and glories sink into utter insignificance.

To recite such interpretations and phantasies, is to refute them. Yet recent developments in England, Germany, and our own country, exhibit phantasies not less airy than these. It behooves us, then, to gird up our loins, and *be sober*, hoping, praying, and laboring for the coming and establishment of a kingdom which, as the apostle says, shall never be shaken, (Heb. 12: 28), and which, in its consummation, will be adorned with all the glories that the presence of God and the Redeemer can impart.

[Whoever wishes to pursue the history of the development of *Chiliasm*, i. e. a belief in the *thousand years'* reign of Christ and the saints on earth, can easily find the means of accomplishing this end. He may begin with the Epistle of Barnabas, cap. 15, in Cotel. Pat. Apostol. p. 45. After this come Hermas Pastor, Vis. I., Cot. P. A. p. 76, which will give him some hints. Irenaeus, cont. Haeres. V. c. 33—36, presents an ample opening.

A passage in Justin Martyr, Dial. cum Tryphone, p. 306 seq. ed. Colon., should not be overlooked; which, though in some respects obscure and much controverted, will give important hints as to the shape of general opinion at that time. A somewhat graphic passage may be found in Tertullian, Advers. Marcionem, III. 24, where he tells us of a full development made by himself in his book *De Spe Fidelium* (now lost). Distinct recognitions of Chiliasm at an early period, may be found in Euseb. III. 28 and 39. VII. 24, et al. By far the most copious and eloquent account, however, of *chiliastic* views in ancient times, may be found in Lactantius, Instt. VII. § 14 seq., and Epit. c. 71 seq. An instructive exposition of the ancient history of Chiliasm, by W. Muenscher, may be found in Henke's Mag. für Relig. philosophie, Exegese, etc. VI. p. 239 seq. Beyond all comparison the fullest, richest, and most complete development of *Chiliasm* is made in Corrodi's *Geschichte des Chiliasmus*, Vol. I—IV. small 8vo.; a book replete with learning, specially of a Talmudic and Rabbinic kind, and with the exhibition of keen critical acumen and powers of sarcasm not often to be met with. But withal, he is bitterly prejudiced against the Apocalypse, and appears to have written his work in order to destroy the credit of it. He is altogether uncandid in examining and weighing the historical testimony respecting it, and has greatly misconceived of the object and aim of the book. But his work is a spacious *Repositorium* of everything that has been said, or dreamed, about the Millennium; and one finds in it a complete historical apparatus. Corrodi brings the history of the principal enthusiasts, in respect to the Millennium, down to the latter part of the last century. Few books are written with equal vivacity, or with equal keenness of discernment and of satire. He who knows how to separate the good from the bad, may derive much from the work, which is rare and valuable.]

APPENDIX.

[I was desirous, when characterizing Herder's work on the Apocalypse (Vol. I. p. 471), to give the reader some specimens of his mode of defending and illustrating this book; but a fear that I should transgress the bounds prescribed to the present volumes, deterred me from doing so. Having now completed the printing, and finding some little space which may be allowed me, I embrace the opportunity to lay before our religious public a specimen of the manner in which Herder, in his celebrated work called Maran Atha (the Lord will come), deals with the Apocalypse, and with its opposers. The work of Herder has become rather scarce in Germany; and in our country it can be but very little known, except among some classes of the German population. In his time, Herder performed an important service with respect to the book in question. He arrested the current which Oeder and Semler and Corrodi had set in motion so strongly against the Apocalypse. The peculiarities of his style are adapted to excite attention, and create a lively interest in what he says. I will not call him the *Tacitus* of the Germans; for he has an imagination so luxuriant, fancy so boundless, and vivacity so sparkling, that I cannot well liken him to Tacitus. But in brevity and sententiousness, and in the apothegmatic form of his sentences, and the pregnant sense of his words, he has much resemblance to Tacitus.

It is impossible for me to give my readers an exact picture of Herder's *manner*. In the first place, our language lacks the power and energy and variety of the German. In the second, Herder is so peculiarly idiomatic, that any one might as well ask him to translate *Shakspeare* into German, as to demand of me to give the exact image of *Herder* in English. Still something may be done, and something to our present purpose. Such of my readers as are not acquainted with the German style and manner, among their more popular and lively writers, will be glad to see a specimen of what Herder wrote some sixty years ago, in order to vindicate and explain his favourite book.

At the close of his Commentary, he addresses himself to the task in question, and occupies more than 100 pages in the performance of it. From the first part of his Appendix I have selected the specimens of his composition which now follow.]

Thus far we have gone through with the imagery of the book, in order first of all to show that it is intelligible, and to elicit its meaning from itself, and from the writings of the prophets, together with the

testimony of Christ and of history. This was our first and principal task. There has heretofore been a general prejudice against the book as being unintelligible. It is assumed that the key to the book is lost, and consequently that its explanation must necessarily rest on mere conceit and arbitrary assumption. These views must be met and opposed by fact and argument, before anything further is said.

To me it seems, that they may be fully contradicted. The images which the book employs, *speak*, as all images do which are rationally employed, i. e. *they have a meaning.* Is a metaphor, an allegory, a coin, a statue, yea a whole system of mythology, intelligible by virtue of imagery in poems, speeches, philosophy, works of art, as soon as it is found to have a meaning, and do we then consider ourselves as in possession of *data* sufficient to make out its intelligibility; is this true in respect to the Greeks and Romans, and is it admitted without contradiction and adopted; then why not apply the same intelligible language of imagery to the Hebrew prophets? These had all one spirit, one object; one builds on another, one explains another, and as gold have they all been preserved. No imagery has remained more pure, or been more thoroughly proved, than this. No imagery, moreover, is so thoroughly incorporated with the genius of the people, their writings, and their language. The Hebrew poetry is as it were all symbol, imagery, holy and lofty diction. Even the prose writers must needs speak in a tropical way, because their language demands it; still more must teachers and prophets do this. No language loves and affords imagery like this. In one is a fiery glance, in another a breath full of the spirit of the Lord. So speaks the Old and New Testament; so speaks the book before us, which is the sum of both.

It is a mere old wives' tale, that a special key belongs to it, or that it has been lost. Who writes a book without a key? Who writes such an one for seven churches? Did John append a key to the book when he sent it? How did it look? Who has seen it? And where was it lost? In the sea at Patmos, or in the Meander? John writes a book for others, for many; a book on whose contents he was so intent, that he heaps curse upon curse on him who curtails it, and proffers blessing upon blessing to him who reads, hears, and obeys it. And still this book is said to be an unintelligible enigma, an unmeaning something which is fast sealed up, which no one but its author can understand, and which perhaps he himself did not understand. Can anything be more incongruous? And if it were intelligible to the Christians of that day, why not to us, who have in like manner the writings of the Old Testament, and what is still more, the written testimony of Jesus, and of the history to which the book adverts. They lived in times of dis-

tress; they must needs wait for the fulfilment of prediction; they could not therefore inspect the contents of the book in any other way than through the mists which hang about the future. We live 1700 years after them, in the most luminous period of history. Is the book fulfilled, (for itself declares that it must *soon*, *speedily*, *shortly* be fulfilled), then must history give us some opening to it. Was it fulfilled in the circle of John, in Judea, or in Christendom? Very good; the history of either is not involved in darkness. Respecting the events of Judea we have eye-witnesses and historians, so accurate and impartial as can rarely be found in respect to other events. Christianity, moreover, is not wanting as to histories. In brief, if this book was fulfilled, it was fulfilled in a clearer manner than any prophecy of the Old Testament, uttered in times incomparably more obscure. And what kind of a prophecy must that be, which, after its fulfilment has been clearly set forth, is still unintelligible?

This book is not of such a nature; and I scarcely know how any one could have ever deemed it to be so. I ask no one to believe me, but to believe himself, and to see with his own eyes. Of what avail is it, to make efforts to render current the meaning of a symbol by the credit of an arbitrary explanation? Many have done this; but time will still come, and with her impartial hand brush away all the artificial colouring of an explanation, which one had palmed upon himself and his contemporaries. Only the gold of truth is imperishable. This only, in the interpretation of this book, can give certainty and harmony; this is superior to all party-spirit. So long as one employs an unnatural mode of interpreting a book of symbols, so long he will explain it in a capricious, arbitrary, narrow, and ungrounded manner. No harmony of opinions can be expected in this way; for the paths of error, of conceit, of party-feeling, and of illusion, are without number. Each one chooses his own because it is his; and then he usually defends it against all others, and not seldom against himself. It is error only that blinds him; it is darkness which makes him severe and sensitive. The light of truth, if it is pure and is admitted, appears altogether beautiful, clear, and peaceful, for all and to all. A straight line is the shortest, and can be but one; of the crooked and broken lines there is a number beyond all computation, from every quarter and in every direction.

Whenever I give myself to the guidance of sound judgment—to the best and eternal testimony of truth, it renders me very quiet as to the intrinsic value of my interpretation. It has significancy, and operates by itself, like the symbols which it explains. Here and there I find myself in opposition to some great and good interpreters, such as Grotius, Wetstein, Abauzit, and Harenberg; but only now and then, for one or two

steps. Mostly I let them go their own way, and go forward on mine alone. May the reader go with me; or rather, may he follow himself and the sound and simple dictates of truth. Where this speaks to him may he take my word; where not, let him amend and correct my errors. My leading principle has been, to regard no symbol in an arbitrary manner, and to make it mean nothing which it does not plainly mean, like every allegory, statue, and coin. I know of no mystical and typical word (according to the perverted meaning of this expression) in all the book; and yet, the whole book is in a sound sense typical and mystical. I will not spend a moment in begging for the assent and approbation of others. My explanation must speak for itself, as the book does.

That which has demanded much reflection, is the manner in which I should present and analyze the symbols. Nothing is more difficult than this. An image must speak for itself, if it have any meaning. In all its lineaments it must be consentaneous, and at once present itself—at least an image in the spirit of the East. Here moreover it is said: "Jehovah speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast." His measure is brevity, his operation the twinkling of an eye. How now, if the interpreter will expound, and bring forward one by one, and dismember, and cut in pieces? In the Apocalypse everything is in rapid motion; everything hastens and urges on toward the goal; it is a messenger of the swift-coming Lord, of lightning, of the judge. At one time the image is that of the sharp sword of the breath; at another, the snow-white locks on the head of the conqueror; here a fiery look of Jehovah, there the rushing of his approaching feet, a cry, a breath, a voice of the Spirit. How shall I present these? How analyze and explain them? In the whole book is rapidity, presence, arrival, a seal to be broken, the sound of flying trumpets, signs and messengers and visions passing through the air, which hasten on, and almost present themselves at one and the same time. Were it possible that the four living creatures should cry out together, and the four seals be broken in rapid succession, and the four first trumpets root up the elements all at once, and could I put all these visions together, so that seven churches should flame up around one Son of man, so that the Lamb on the loftiest heights of the blessed should appear at the same time with the beast from the pit of destruction below, and great Babylon impress itself at once on the mind, as harlot, as town, as beast, and as monster —all this, and unspeakably more—were it possible, and possible for me, then might I count upon one entire impression of the meaning and explanation of this book. But it is beyond my reach. The meaning soars on wings, but words can merely creep. There stands the symbol,

and lives, and breathes; but the words must separate and divide it, and in ways so various, that perhaps the image as a whole is perceptible only to *connoisseurs*. I have laboured against such a consequence; I have made things follow in rapid succession, put symbols together again which I must needs divide, given a hint, a reference here and there to the testimony of Christ, then to the saying of a prophet. Rabbinical usages and idioms of language I have left out, because I have taken them for granted, and perhaps at some other time may publish an appropriate lexicon of the imagery in respect to its sources and its idiom, with a history of the interpretations and the influence of this book. Enough at present, that there was not time for all this. In the sequency—in the entirety of the images, everything is comprised, yea, everything which can give light to the interpreter or reader, which keeps him in the right path, and hurries him to the last impression of the book. To this chain I felt it necessary to betake myself. I hastened to do it, and forced my way through the important consequences of the coming of the Lord. Here I stood ashamed. Have I been able to present a single symbol as it there stands? To explain a single image, as it waves between heaven and earth? Have I been able to handle the holy chain, which in a sevenfold manner winds and turns, and is everywhere Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end of the coming Lord of the world? I have done what I could; may the reader do still more! Let him float on the rushing stream of look and of thought, where tongue and pen cannot follow. Let him bring together and arrange and consider; I will come to his aid with a few ideas.

[Herder next proceeds to unfold the various arrangements of the book, as made in reference to the number *seven*. Overlooking the far more fundamental use of the number *three*, throughout the book, he refers all its artificial arrangements to the *heptade*. It would be of little interest to the reader to translate this part of his remarks. I pass by it, therefore, and go on to exhibit what he says about other qualities of the book, p. 250 seq.]

This septuplex arrangement helps the book to a wonderful *unity*. There is but one voice in it, through all its epistles, seals, trumpets, signs, and plagues, viz. THE LORD IS COMING. There is but one stamp on all its phenomena and wonders: "Alpha and Omega, beginning and end, is God the Lord, who is and was and is to come, the Lord of all." So declares John; he puts his seal upon it; and through all the images and signs of the book, everything by itself, and agreeably to the words of Christ and of the prophets, naturally points to this. The Lord said *I come;* and he did come. The last of the ancient prophets exclaimed: "Who will abide the day of his coming? He will sit and assay and

purify the silver," etc. And see! He sits, and assays, and purifies the sons of Levi, as gold and silver. It is the first sign of his coming, that *he punishes and is a swift witness against sorcerers and adulterers and the unclean.* His own, however, at the same time, he distinguishes in a notable manner. Agreeably to this purification, the first vision relates to the symbol of his ever and inwardly near presence and coming. The closed book is opened. The broken seals are forebodings, signs, of his coming — mere significant signs. How often have the prophets said: *The day of the Lord cometh, bloody, fearful, terrible!* His four plagues are his four horses before his chariot. His coming delays, until blood-guiltiness has reached its height. When he does come, however, heaven and earth flee away at his presence. The forebodings are fulfilled. The trumpets sound. Heaven and earth are dashed in pieces. Not merely city-walls fall, but pieces of the firmament, hailstones from God, mountains, clefts. Blow ye the trumpets. THE LORD COMES. Before him move along blood and fire and smoke. The sun becomes darkness, the moon blood, before the terrible day of the Lord comes. Locusts march before him; before him prance the horses and their riders. He approaches. The last witnesses make their appearance. See! I will send them the prophet Elijah, before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. He comes. Shouts of victory echo from the heavenly world. On earth, the abominations and monsters of cunning and malignity must be removed. Angels shout the fall of Babylon, the destruction of misleaders, that there may be rest. The sickle cuts down the harvest. The vine blossoms for a vintage, for a gladsome harvest. *Lift up your eyes, the field is already white for the harvest.* The last and final plagues come; the day of the Lord is glowing like an oven, and all traitors are straw. The Euphrates is dry; the slaughter-offerings are collected; he comes as an avenger, he comes as judge. The The judgment is held. The righteous awake like morning stars; and after them the whole host. Babylon is fallen; Jerusalem shines in splendour. The dragon sinks down to the pit; THE LORD IS KING.

Thus it is that there is in everything but one voice, one subject. What the symbols do not say, that is said by intervening calls and voices and choirs. Before every heptade appears a messenger, who reminds us of the beginning, and points us to the end. The rings are clasped together, and lose not their hold, even to the last. The choir of heaven exchanges with the Spirit on earth. This intercedes, calls out, warns, consoles. It preserves, through all the distressing visions, the foreboding of a better future. The name of the Holy One is on the book and on his elect. The city of God, the Lamb, the heavenly priesthood, wave before their eyes as their final portion and inheritance.

Who will give me strength to match this wonderful simplicity with the loftiness, the variegated forms, the power, and the rapidity of these symbols? Under the influence of many a one among them, the soul succumbs. They stand as between heaven and earth. They comprise eternity within the circle of a small glance of time. HE IS AND WAS AND IS TO COME, THE ALMIGHTY! His epistles at the commencement of the book are sparks of his fiery glance, how and when he is felt in the secret recesses of the heart, in the glowing monuments of the remembrance of him. His breath is a two-edged sword, which, as a judge of the thoughts, divides soul and body, marrow and bone.

Thy book, O thou Counsellor, thou invisible One, is closed, often to our apprehension closed with seven seals. When may we forebode thy presence? When shall we mark well, that our destiny waves in thy hand? When seals like these are broken, and thy horsemen go forth, and the living creatures under thy throne cry out: *Come and see*, on the corpse-field of the dying who utter the death-rattle, over the ruins of a royal city, in the streets of famine and the houses of wasting maladies, even the contemner of God shudders at the presence of the avenger, of the judge, and forebodes a sealed book of his destiny. Ancient of days, so dost thou hide thyself! By wonderful signs of the times, do we find some traces of thy government which is past finding out. What have they done, that innocent flock, which dies by the sword of the warrior, by the teeth of hunger and of wild beasts? Like lambs for the slaughter they lie there, that the sleeping world may see the footsteps of thy goings. With the swift and noble Conqueror, with his wreath of honour, the book begins; it ends with death and the regions of hell. And yet how few there are, who in such phenomena behold thy coming, and hear the tranquil blood of murdered innocence crying for vengeance and imploring redemption!

The great events of war are to the seer only the sound of trumpets for warning; great leaders are only falling stars; the most renowned armies of the world are a host of hissing serpents and amphisbaenas. The central point of worldly revolutions, the strife of good and evil, is to him like a contest in the air, when fiery red and dark black clouds contend with sun, moon, and every kind of cheering and gladsome light. God is the father of light, and light must therefore continue to be light.

All the power and cunning of the world, whatever crowns they may wear, with whatever names of celebrity they may be adorned, whatever homage they may demand, whatever arts they may promote, if it strive with God and the Lamb, it is to him Belial, a monster, a beast from the pit, the abomination of sin, and the child of destruction. The dragon

is its father, and the abyss its destiny. Babylon falls; and what a world of riches and of profit and of pleasure and of fine arts, falls with it! All lamentations over it are vain; while those who keep the word of God and adhere to the truth of Jesus, with a noble simplicity like to that of him who is the essence and star of the book, rise and shine forever.

(3) THE BOOK OF REVELATION, even if one does not understand the first and most immediate history of its explanation, IS A BOOK FOR ALL HEARTS AND ALL TIMES.

It contains the essence of Christianity and of worldly history. It has, through all its changes and circumstances affected by time, the same stamp upon it: THE LORD IS NIGH; HIS KINGDOM COMES!

How many a prophet have we in the O. Testament, whose immediate historical circumstances respecting many a passage we do not understand; and still these passages, which contain divine wisdom, doctrine, and consolation, are manna for all hearts and for all times. Must not this be the case also with that book, which is the compend of nearly all the prophets and apostles? It is a book of instruction and comfort for all the churches among whom Christ walks, even when the uneducated do not understand the learned explanation of it.

In respect to the *epistles*, (without assigning any mystical periods to them), I have already shown this. The rest of the book is of the like tenor. The belief that Christ who died now lives, that Christ who lived in retirement now reigns, that Christ once in a state of humiliation now moves amid the splendours of God's glory—this belief, can it be strengthened in any way better than by the first appearance of the risen and glorious Saviour? His visage is like the sun; his breath, omnipotence; the keys of death and hell are his; he wills and it is done. What are ten days of trouble in comparison with an eternal reward? What are the thirty years of his humiliation compared with his eternal exaltation? Therefore: Be thou faithful unto death. The crown of life awaits thee.

Thou livest in a time of oppression; the book of destiny sealed up hangs suspended over thee and thy people. Weep not; the Lion of the tribe of Judah has overcome. The book is in his hand. He fulfils and will fulfil it.

Fearful seals are broken over thee. Thou hearest in the rustling of time's slow foot horrible forebodings. Heaven and earth threaten; and most of all the increasing iniquity of men; war ravages, pestilence, famine kills; noble men die, good men perish with sighing; the land trembles, its pillars are shaken: *Fear not, the Lord is thy God, and his name is on thee.* When thou passest through the waters, he will be with

thee, so that the floods shall not drown thee; when thou goest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, nor the flame kindle upon thee. The number of thine, like the covenant of the living, is deposited in his bosom and sealed.

The last forebodings come; a stillness pregnant with death, an expectation of all things. The trumpets are given. *My God, remember me for good!* the incense offering of prayer in silence exclaims. The silent answer of God is: "I have graven thee upon mine hands." For sorcerers, murderers, idolaters, whoremongers, (who alas! as the experience of the world shows, do not amend their lives), are reserved the plagues. They are tormented for a long period by them. But in the midst of these plagues appears the angel of peace, with the rain-bow about his head, and he swears the oath of the ancient covenant: *Let the mountains and hills sink and vanish; the promise of God fails not.* The rainbow comes forth behind the flood, like a boundary of the throne of grace, more beautiful than ever. On account of the elect, these days are shortened. Short is the way through the sea of trouble; eternal the peace which follows; the palms and crowns will never fade.

The temple of God is given up; but it is only the outward and profaned court of the Gentiles; the true temple of God, with all who worship in it, is reserved for a more beautiful building.

The last two witnesses appear. How does God honour them! How nobly does he invest them, living and dying, with ornaments and rewards! Who is there, when he reads this passage, that does not desire a death like theirs? Lamps before the Lord, olive-trees before the God of their country, Moses and Elijah in respect to reward!

Heaven opens; the temple of God, the ark of the covenant is seen; on earth it cannot yet appear. Phantoms of cunning and power rise up. Do not waver. The voices of heaven sing: IT IS DONE; and it will be done on earth. As here so always, the good is born in the great kingdom of the Father of all. The mother is persecuted; the child is made safe, for God is his father. To the earthly mother is appointed her place, the desert of trouble; behind her rushes without harm the stream of persecution; but the earth helps the afflicted, and swallows up the fruitless stream. Even in the wilderness of banishment, compassion is extended to her for a time and times and half a time. Man indeed beholds for the present thy beauty, thou noble sun-and-star-begirt; but thy Son is, what he ever will be, eternal king, the heir of the world. His appropriate destiny awaits the subdued dragon—by the patience of the Lamb and the courage of the Lion he is wounded unto death.

Still, in his name phantoms of tyranny and cunning rise up, horrible phenomena! The earth trembles under the foot of the beast, nations

and armies commit ravages upon religion, laws, God, and freedom, and tread them down with the feet of bears. They roar against God and his tabernacle, and everything moans out and whines: 'Who is like to him? Who can make war with him?' The mass permit themselves to be marked, and lose conscience and soul, and go like beasts of slaughter into the manacles of slavery.

His, also, is that other beast, the dragon in sheep's clothing, the smooth, lying, political prophet. Miracles are at his command. Fire from heaven, and all the arts of men are at hand; and all this, that an image may be made for the beast, and everything bear the mark and number of his name, become idolaters, slaves, and a slaughter-herd. Exult, ye monsters, in your short and fruitless reign, your hellish craftiness and hellish power here below; on yonder height stands the Lamb, and around him his elect host, in a very different elevation and with very different wisdom.

What symbols of consolation and instruction are the harvest and the vintage, the song of heaven before the last plagues, and finally the terrible lamentation and death-song over prostrate and sinking Babylon. As a stone it goes down, and all voices in it become dumb, and all its lovers howl and cry out. So when the Spirit speaks, the splendour of all vanishes; quickly does all the whoredom and luxury and oppression of the world disappear, for the fashion of this world passeth away.

> ——Melted into air, into thin air,
> And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea all which it inherits, shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
> As dreams are made of . . . . .

God's word alone remains constant. Truth, faithfulness, justice march along crowned, upon white horses. The goodness of the witnesses of Jesus, sown in stillness, now comes forth. They move on like morning-stars from the bosom of night, and shine with the splendour of heaven. Your blood, so long trodden under feet, and which cried out unheard, is now an ornament of your vesture. Your work, the noblest deeds in the world, comes forth and blossoms, like the sunken Atlantis. The earth awakes; the deeds of men come to the light; the evil is banished, the eternal aim of all your wishes, the city of God and the bride appears. How many souls have comforted themselves with the spirit of these symbols! How many hearts has the proclamation quickened: 'Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the wa-

ter of life freely!" Your bursting eyes have seen the city of God, and without symbols your parched tongue has been revived. They fell asleep and passed on thither. See there! The dwelling of God is with men. God himself is with them, and he is their God and they are his people. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord! They rest from their labours and their works do follow them. God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. Distress and mourning are no more. Former things have passed away.

In general it seems to me a dishonour and a folly to mock at and despise a saying, perhaps one of the noblest, most tender, most powerful touches of truth, because it is found in the decried Apocalypse. *See! the Lord comes, and his reward is with him, to give to every one according to his works.* Is not that declaration an eternal truth of God? Does it not speak this as strongly and tenderly as it can be spoken? Does not Isaiah say the same? Has any good and honourable heathen ever doubted it? And what is there now which is contemptible and ridiculous, when the Apocalypse employs it as a seal in this place? Would it not he unjust and dishonourable, should any one so manage with the writing of a heathen or a heretic, and represent the roses as not being roses, because they grow among thorns? And with respect to this book, which has lived more than a thousand years, and sufficiently proved its influence on the hearts of men—one ought to spare the like of this. Let each one estimate it as he will, yet let him concede the good which belongs to it. That surely is divine, whoever wrote the book, or for whatever purpose it was written. Your productions, ye despisers, will they ever have the influence and the long life of this? Where there is an influence, there must be a ground for influence. Where a book, through thousands of years, stirs up the heart and awakens the soul, and leaves neither friend nor foe indifferent, and scarcely has a lukewarm friend or enemy, in such a book there must be something substantial, whatever any one may say. One does not contend about nothing. A mere nothing one forgets. In respect to what is worthy of note in this book, time has already judged; and it is folly to attempt to put down by conceit, what has supported itself so long by reality.

(4) 'But why has this book so many enemies, at all times, and beyond all others? Enemies, too, to whom the most obtuse wit, the most silly conceit, which they would despise in respect to any other thing in every other mouth, is agreeable, if it will only be injurious to this book?'

The reasons of this may easily be conjectured. They lie in the nature of the thing. It carries, like everything else, its destiny along with itself. First, the book consists of symbols; and philosophers cannot

endure symbols. The truth must exhibit itself pure, naked, abstract, in a philosophical way; for it has long shown itself in that way. No question then is asked: where? when? wherefore? whereto? by whom was this book written symbolically? None, whether it should not have been so written. But—should it not have been written by a philosopher for philosophers? No question is asked, whether the symbols are pregnant with meaning, true, clear, efficient, intelligible, or whether there is in the whole book nothing but symbols. It is enough, that there are symbols. We can make nothing out of symbols. At the best, they are mere descriptions of the truth, and we wish for demonstrations. Deductions, theorems, syllogisms we love. Truth which needs none of the senses to aid it, (although it is full of sense, and one attains to it only by sense), is what we wish. Experience, effort, objects of sense, symbols, are beneath us, as the clouds beneath the clear light of the sun.—I only add, that all this is no mere mockery.

Secondly, nature herself attempers different minds in various ways. She gives to one more of the power of abstraction, to another more of the power of synthesis; seldom are both found in company. In our academical education, there are unspeakably more teachers of that than of this. One is formed more for abstraction, than for inspection; more for analysis than for pure comprehension, experience, and action. Hence, in a little time, the powers of intuition, being neglected, are altogether lost. Let one of the learned, now, who has grown grey over abstraction, take up the Apocalypse. What can he see in it? Symbols he does not see, but merely colours. That has no meaning to him, which has the clearest meaning to another, yea one which is seen at the very first view. Does he, then, because he is learned, begin to discourse and explain? What else can he make of the book but nonsense? He analyzes, and cuts to pieces, and daubs with colours; but he has neither eye, nor proper station for view, nor any idea of the design of the work. He pours out then whatever is in his brain—stale church and heretic-history, or lying, feeble, narrow-minded political history. Here now is a beautiful model which others imitate. The more cautious point to his example, and say: If so great a man erred, who must not err? Who would give himself up to a book which has robbed even a learned man of his senses. "The great Newton made his Apocalypse, because there was an Apocalypse." So? One might rather say: The great Newton made his Apocalypse, because he was the great Newton. He did not come to it, as he should do, without prejudice, without system. He came as a reckoner, a chronologer. It must be an appendix to Daniel, that his system might be complete. He was, therefore, no unsophisticated reader of the book. A woman, a child, a man within the circle

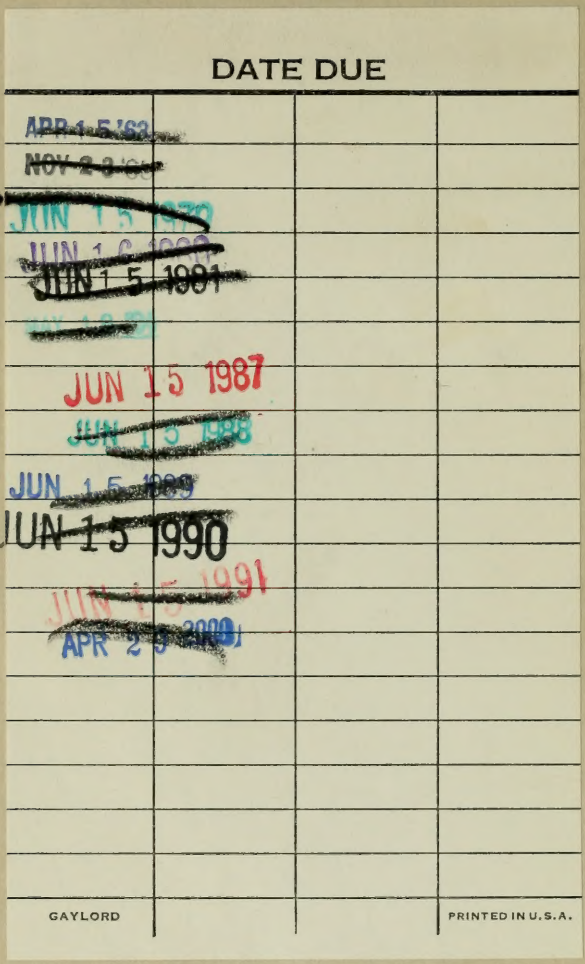
of his own senses, can often exhibit more tact in the position of symbols, better hit upon their meaning, than the greatest among the learned, whose brains are filled with other things. In respect to all images and symbols from common life, this is conceded. Why not then in respect to the symbol of symbols—the Apocalypse? It has and is a world by itself. He who lacks sensibility and point in vision, walks in darkness, and gropes round after colours. Even to the reading of a book which is intelligibly read, feeling, leisure, and proper station for view, is necessary. Whoever disdains to see as a child, or as an impartial and feeling man to let the book speak for itself, he is no reader of this book, nor of its meaning. Full of his systems, of his learning, of prejudices, and polemic hypotheses, let him indeed read anything in it, but let him not venture to condemn. Still less should he measure the power in others of understanding symbols, by his own. To the dumb one does not speak. The painter does not perform his work for the blind.

Thirdly; very often, even among interpreters, has the heart misled the understanding, and implanted the hatred or the love of this book. For the most part, people of feeling, as has been shown, not those of dry abstraction-faculties (these despise the book and let it alone), are the ones who apply themselves to this book. Often they pour out what is in their hearts; they paint it with the blood and sap of their life. This happened, that reached the mark. They have found their time, and the very best time, too, which they ever thought of. Every image is in itself true, (although perhaps there is not a syllable in the book of all this), and is made very prominent; on the nicer touches of the book it appears still stronger. They raise up a party. One man of warm heart and of great talent, a Savonarola, a Joachim, a Petersen, a Bengel, etc., would have made a party even without the Revelation. It was nothing more than the vehicle of their favourite ideas, an object of their wonder and of their homage. One believed, because it came from them; what one could not support, was rendered current by the name of the interpreter. One read with folded hands. All this now was winning sport to the enemies of the book, and to party-feeling. They hated with the more coolness what one praised so warmly and often without foresight. Now then the book has nothing good or intelligible in it, because they did not understand it, and found in it a false good.—Such is the history of the book through all ages. Montanist enthusiasts, Cerinthian dreamers, raised up a Caius, who, to contradict them, cast away the guiltless book, which teaches neither Montanism nor Cerinthism. Shameless triflers with the business of interpretation roused up a searching Dionysius, who timidly said: "I do not understand it, although it may be a good book." When one for centuries had found a symbol of antichrist in heathen Rome, and Eusebius had lived

to see a Christian Rome which still was not the heavenly Jerusalem, it was natural for him to be cold, and to find beyond a doubt the heavenly Jerusalem in the city which Constantine built.

So has it been, even down to the latest times. The history of the book, of partiality for it and hatred against it, is very natural. But is folly because of this to hang upon it, or upon the testimony of particular men, as if these things were decisive. See! here is a better way. Let the ragged garments lie which are stripped off, and look at the person, see the book itself. Hate it not before hand, and thou wilt rightly understand it, and then thou wilt certainly learn to love it.

END.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